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TALES

From The HISTORY

Of NEWPORT

N.H.

By SAM. H. EDES

FOREWORD

When there lives in any town a man with a passion for history, with the patience to seek out its bits and piece them together, with a consuming love for his town, and with the literary skill to weave all his patches together into a colorful story, warmly forgiving the sins of the past that have left their scars on his era, that town is indeed fortunate.

Such a town is Newport, New Hampshire.

And such a man is Sam. H. Edes, a man of great personal charm, salty wit and perceiving wisdom. In this volume he has set down some of the tales that he has gathered in a lifetime of observation and fact-gathering. They are tales he has selected to give the reader some of the high spots in the life of the town he loves and to tell about some of the men and women who have helped shape it.

E. D.

Newport, New Hampshire
1963

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Sarah Josepha Hale lived in house at right. Later it became Methodist parsonage, and since then it has been moved to Myrtle St. Richards Free Library in center demolished in 1963.

The Little Red School House, located two miles south of Newport on Route 10. Originally built in 1835, it served as a district school for over 50 years.

CHAPTER I

EARLIEST TIMES

I have often wondered when, on some pleasant afternoon, I have been from some high point contemplating the pleasant and mild piece of land which, owing to a brain-storm which once passed over the mind of His Excellency Benning Wentworth, for the time being Royal Governor of New Hampshire, is familiar to us now under the name of "Newport" — what this same valley looked like five or ten thousand years ago. It seems a bootless line of thought, but of one thing we may be sure — at some time way back there this landscape was very different from this one with which we are now familiar.

Geologically it is a pretty old country. Authorities say that the first land of this western continent rose out of the deep along here somewhere, but of course that was not a matter of a few thousands of years, but probably the time must be reckoned in the millions. So our query of five or ten thousand years is surely a modest one, and not beyond hope of a reasonable answer.

We can be sure that Lake Sunapee was already glittering in well developed sunlight and that the sweet river we call the Sugar was making pleasant music over the rocks at the East barrier, but then we come to a pause. For there is sure evidence that the valley of the Sugar itself has been at some time a lake. It was probably six to eight miles long, and a narrow arm extended around the Hill and followed the course of the present river through North Newport and came to an end somewhere near the high walled valley at Chandler's. Probably it was not too deep. Seventy-five to 100 feet perhaps — well above the highest of our present steeples and towers. It may be there was life in it and on it — but of this we know nothing.

Then, one day there came an event— earthquake perhaps, or such a storm as we moderns never dreamt of — maybe a spring freshet of tremendous and unprecedented violence. At any rate it appears that the rock barrier which for ages had barred the waters from the

West gave way, and with a tremendous roar, accompanied by thunderings and vivid flashes of lightning, if you like it that way, the lake — nameless of course — went roaring and plunging down through the gap, tumbling great rocks like jackstraws along its path, leaving no living thing in all the area which used to be a pleasant and smiling lake.

For such is the way of the waters when released from proper bounds, and answering the demands of mere gravity to develop a fury undreamed of a few moments before. Ah yes, that would have been something to see! And it surely happened, a small copy of that Flood which the Bible still talks about as a fact of the ancient time. And what of the fair plains of Claremont and below? We don't know, but there's many a half-buried and rotting boulder in the fields to the west that could tell us if they suddenly were blessed with power of speech — a story of terror, even to a rock. But we can be pretty certain that their silence, now held for these thousands of years, will continue for thousands more, barring the interposition of some other cataclysm.

After all, the termendous racket incident to the scene we have just been witnessing was a thing to which the valley must have become accustomed, because these hills and valleys were not formed throughout the ages without many scenes of violence and fury, all accompanied by great amounts of noise — if you will admit that noise can exist without the aid of human ears.

However that may be, there seems to be no other event on which we may fasten for a good many thousand years. Not indeed before the coming of the white man. How much scurrying around the American Indian may have done in the centuries during which he had no rivals in this wilderness we do not know. His hunting parties, his war parties — if they came and went, they did so very quietly, leaving nothing, not even a burnt-out campfire to record the fact of his presence. So we may disregard him and look for the entrance of the first white settlers, who, we may be sure, made plenty of noise to announce their presence in these ancient woods.

CHAPTER II

SETTLEMENT

The White Man Arrives — Terms of Governor's Charter

Jumping over, now, any number of centuries, not over 10 perhaps, to give Nature, with her wonderful healing properties, time to eradicate the ugly scars of the flood and make this area beautiful again, we find the next event of note to be the arrival of the white man. The official date of this event is generally reckoned as 1761 because the Charter from the Royal Governor of New Hampshire bears that date.

However, the event itself was as much due to the breaking of barriers as was the flood. The barrier this time, however, was the presence of the Indian tribes, who not only threatened but actually did work with arrow, gun, scalping knife and fire so effectually as practically to bar all our lands here in the North from settlement for just about 200 years. Only along the coast and a few great rivers durst the Englishman venture to raise his humble cabin throughout all that time — and then it was only at great peril of life, hair and limb. Raiders drove the settlers out of Keene, beseiged Charlestown, in spite of the fort there, and drove their raids to the borders of Portsmouth even, before they could be stopped. Three separate wars, following close upon one another, and all lumped together in New Hampshire history under the general title of the French and Indian wars, kept the country-side in a perpetual state of alarm throughout most of this period.

But of this our fair valley knew nothing. There was nobody here to be alarmed. Then in 1759 a permanent peace was arranged, Canada passed into the hands of the English, and without French assistance the Indian was helpless.

All New Hampshire and Vermont became available for settlement. And this was not all, the claims of George Mason to much of the country, and the uncertainty as to who had the power to dispose of this land, was, in 1741, cleared up by the courts. Benning Went-

worth, well liked, courtly and urbane, had become the first Royal Governor, and things were really all set for progress.

Benning Wentworth was not only the Royal Governor, he was the first Royal Governor of New Hampshire, all who had previously represented the King in that capacity were also governors of Massachusetts, and generally lived in that state. But New Hampshire now enjoyed a separate entity—not only that, but for good measure claimed most of Vermont as well.

So in the events we are now describing, Governor Wentworth granted to various individuals 16 towns—eight on each side of the Connecticut. Even now, however, it was easier to secure the grant of a township than really to establish a settlement. The Indian troubles were over, but how could people be certain of that! It was no light matter for any but the boldest to plunge into an unbroken wilderness where none of the benefits and institutions of what civilization then existed were to be found — where they were no roads, no schools, no cleared lands, no churches, no doctors, no contact with the outside world.

But certain parts of New England were already becoming crowded. In that day there was little to do but farming for a livelihood. Connecticut was one of these parts. So it happened that certain people in the old town of Killingworth, over in the eastern part of Connecticut, near Long Island Sound, heard about this new land, their interest was aroused and it wasn't too difficult to get up a party willing to take the risk, since nothing better seemed to present itself.

It seems, though, from some accounts which are not readily available and are not, therefore, generally known, that it was only on the third attempt that a charter for the land now known as Newport was made to stick. "Grenville" was the first name assigned. This was doubtless in honor of George Grenville, a close advisor of the King, and sponsor of the infamous Stamp Act — which fact later rendered him vastly unpopular in America.

So, when Newport was again chartered and the land was assigned to certain persons who lived in or near Newport, Rhode Island, the name was changed to "Newport" in honor of that place. Whether this was a help, we do not know. At all events, the project fell through and this land was granted a third time. This time the Governor's office didn't bother about a new name — probably none was suggested, and we were baldly put forth under the name of "Newport," there and then starting a query in the minds of a great many people as to the why and wherefore of this name for an inland town with not even a wide place in its river by way of justification. Neither has it annoyed Newport, Rhode Island, to any noticeable extent, and we've gone right on each Newport blandly ignoring the other and refusing to be annoyed by non-essentials.

The Common about 1875. Note the Dexter Richards mansion peeking out from the extreme left. In foreground, at foot of Common, GAR Memorial Tree, which has since grown to full height and been cut down.

CHAPTER III

It is time to be inquiring just what was necessary in that day to get a town started. Well, most of these towns were, purely and simply, a land speculation. The Governor contacted some people who wanted to make money in land -- or they contacted him -- an association of about 60 people was established and shares issued. Of these, the Governor himself received certain shares, so that in the course of a few years he became the state's greatest landowner. But let us look at the town's charter and see just what sort of agreement was entered into between the Governor and the "Proprietors":

THE CHARTER

PROVINCE of NEW HAMPSHIRE

"George, the Third, By the Grace of God of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith & etc

"To all persons to whom these presents shall come Greeting. Know ye that WE of special grace, certain knowledge and meer motion, for the due Encouragement of settling a new plantation within our said province, by and with the advice of our Trutsy and Well beloved Benning Wentworth Esq: Our Governor and Commander in Chief of our said province of New Hampshire in New England and of our council of the said Province - Have upon the Conditions and Reservations hereinafter made given and granted, and by these Presents, for Us our Heirs and Successors, do give and Grant in Equal shares unto our loving subjects, inhabitants of our said Province of New Hampshire, and our other Governments, and to their Heirs and Assigns for Ever, whose names are entered on this Grant, to be divided to and amongst them into Sixty Eight Equal Shares, all that Tract or Parcel of Land Situate lying and being within Our Province of New Hampshire, Containing by Admesurement, Twenty Three Thousand and Forty Acres, which Tract is to contain six miles Square and no more, out of which an Allowance is to be made for Highways, and unimprovable Land, by Rocks, Ponds, Mountains and

Rivers, One Thousand and Forty Acres free, according to a Plan and Survey thereof made by our said Governor's order, and returned into the Secretary's Office and hereinto annexed butted and bounded as follows: (viz) Beginning at a Stake and Stones which stands 78 degrees East, at the distance of Six Miles and One Half Mile from the North-westerly corner of Charlestown, a town formerly Granted in the Province, and runs from the said Stake & Stones N. 8 degrees E. five miles and Seven Eighths of a mile to a Stake and Stones, then S. 60 degrees E Eight Miles and One Quarter of a Mile, then S. 10 degrees W. six miles to a stake and stones, then N. 63 degrees, W. six Miles and one quarter of a mile to a stake and stones, the Bounds first mentioned being six miles and one half miles from the bank of the Connecticut River.

"And that the same be and hereby is incorporated into a township by the name of NEWPORT. And the Inhabitants that do and shall hereafter inhabit the said township, are thereby declared to be enfranchised with and entitled to All and Every the privileges and immunities that other Towns within our Province by law exercise and enjoy—And further, that the said Town as soon as there shall be Fifty Families resident and settles therein, shall have the liberty of holding two Fairs, one of which shall be held on the—and the other on the—annually, which fairs are not to continue longer than the respective—following the said—and that as soon as the said Town shall consist of Fifty Families, a Market may be opened and kept, one or more days in each week, as may be thought most advantageous to the inhabitants.

"Also, that the first meeting for the choice of Town Officers, Agreeable to the Laws of our said Province shall be held on the Third Tuesday of November next, which said meeting shall be notified by Mr. George Harris, who is hereby appointed the Moderator of the first meeting, which he is to Notify and Govern Agreeably to the Laws and Customs of our said Province, and the Annual Meeting for ever hereafter for the choice of

such officers for the said town, shall be on the second Tuesday of March Annually—To have and to hold the said Tract of Land as above expressed, together with all Privileges and Appurtenances to them, and their Respective Heirs and Assigns forever, upon the following Conditions (Viz)

"1st. That every guarantee, his heirs or Assigns shall plant and cultivate Five Acres of Land within a term of five years, for every Fifty Acres contained in his or their share or proportion of land in said Township, and to continue to improve and settle the same Additional cultivations, on Penalty of the forfeiture of his grant or share in the said Township, and of its Reverting to us our heirs and successors, to be by us or their them regranted to such of our Subjects as shall effectually Settle and Cultivate the same.

"2dly. That all White and Other Pine Trees within the said Township, fit for Masting our Royal Navy be carefully preserved for that Use, and none to be Cut or Felled, without our Special Lease for so doing, first had and Obtained, Upon the Penalty of the Forfeiture of the Right of such Grantee, His Heirs and Assigns, to us our Heirs and Successors, as well as being subject to the Penalty of any Acts of Parliament that now are or Hereafter shall be Enacted.

"3dly. That before any division of the land be made to and among the Grantees a Tract of Land as near the center of the said township as the Land will Admit of, shall be reserved and Marked Out for Town Lots one of which shall be allotted to every Grantee of the Contents of One Acre.

"4thly. Yielding and paying therefor to us our Heirs and Successors for the space of Ten Years, to be computed from the date thereof the Rent of One Ear of Indian Corn, only, on the Twenty-fifth day of December Annually, if Lawfully Demanded, the first payment to be made on the twenty-fifth day of December, 1762.

"5thly. Every Proprietor, Settler or Inhabitant, shall yield or Pay unto our Heirs and Successors, Year-

ly and Every Year Forever, From and after the Expiration of Ten Years from the Above Said Twenty-fifth Day of December which will be in the year of our Lord, 1772 one Shilling Proclamation Money for every hundred acres he so owns, settles or Possesses, and so in propation for a Greater or Lesser Tract of Land, which money must be paid by the respective Persons above said, their heirs or assigns, In our Council Chamber in Portsmouth, or to such Officer or officers as shall be appointed to receive the same, and this to be in lieu of all other Rents and Services Whatsoever.

"In Testimony Thereof we have caused the Seal of our Said Province to be hereunto Affixed. Witness Benning Wentworth Esq., Our Governor and Commander in Chief of our said Province, the 6th Day of October in the year of our Lord Christ, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty-one, and in the First Year of Our Reign.

"B. WENTWORTH

"By his Excellency's Command, With Advice of Council
THEODORE ATKINSON, SECRETARY

"Province of New Hampshire, Recorded in the Book of Charters, p. 221-222 Oct. 6, 1761. Per Theodore Atkinson, Secretary

"A true Copy, **Benj'n Giles,** Proprietors Clk.

So Newport was duly chartered in the name of King George III via his well beloved Governor and Commander in Chief, Benning Wentworth. In addition Governor Wentworth had reserved to himself 200 acres as his personal share. This tract, afterward known as "the Governor's farm" was located in the extreme southwest corner of the town, cornering on Claremont, Charlestown and Unity. How this came about we do not know—maybe the Governor's share was always in the SW corner of the township. Anyway, his share of Claremont was similarly located, but it happened in Newport that this share occupied the very highest land in the township and, as it now seems, about the most worthless land of all. But it seems very doubtful, considering the very limited knowledge of the alloting commit-

tee—I mean limited knowledge of the value and desirability of the various tracts, that there was any local desire to "short change" His Excellency. It may be as I have said, merely the standard procedure.

As to the other provisions—the specified ear of Indian corn were never required, and seem only to have been designed as something to rely upon in case the settlers failed to make a suitable effort to clear and settle the land. The provision concerning white pine and other trees suitable for masts for the Royal Navy, also never came into effect, although for a number of years such trees were carefully preserved. In many New Hampshire towns these great trees were carefully cut and transferred to the coast, where they were trans-shipped to England in special ships designed for the purpose. I do not believe any were ever shipped from Newport because a rather special roadway was required and none such seems ever to have been prepared. Eventually the King's masts went into the general stock of trees, which, in the process of clearing the land were yarded into great piles and burned in order to get rid of them. It is a matter of tradition that such a burning place was established at the foot of Claremont Hill on the west side of the meadows. The really profitable part of the venture, so far as the Governor was concerned, would seem to have been the shilling tax for every hundred acres a person possessed. But as this tax was to come into effect only at the end of ten years, and as violent political events intervened before the end of that time, it seems probable that very few, if any shillings were ever paid, although the charter said that this tax would be payable to the Governor's officers or representatives "forever." When the American Revolution came along it was almost certain that the Governor's "farm" was confiscated when he was obliged to flee to Canada, but further details have not been unearthed. Who finally secured this property is field for the future and more careful historian.

We do know, however, that clearing and planting the required acreage proved no small task. Much of

the land proved, upon being laid bare of its forest cover, to be rocky and sometimes barren as well as covered with a well nigh inpenetrable tangle of fallen logs and debris. This area has been subject to prehistoric hurricanes throughout the ages, and those who saw what happened in the woods in the hurricane of 1938 can well imagine the condition of the ancient forests. So it happened that in 1766 a committee was formed to go to Portsmouth to have the charter extended, an effort that seemed to have been easily accomplished, although the success of the mission must have caused the settlers more or less anxiety.

The same year a committee consisting of Ebenezer Merritt, Deacon Jeremiah Clement and Steven Wilcox were named to "open" a cart road into town from North Charlestown. This road was the only link with the outside world for some years. Probably not much of a road, but served to guide the settlers and their families into the wilderness from North Charlestown. No further roads seem to have been built for three or four years at least. Just how the settlers found their way to the various tracts assigned to them we are not told, except that we hear of Thomas Wilmarth coming into town on foot, with a 40-pound pack on his back and finding his land, which was over near the Governor's Farm, by following marked trees.

CHAPTER IV

SURVEY

Somewhere around 1760 Governor Benning Wentworth sent surveyors up into this region to survey or at least outline 16 townships in the wild country North of Charlestown. Charlestown was then known as "Number Four," that is fourth and last of the chain of forts extending northward from the Massachusetts line. Considering that these surveyors had little information to go on, crude maps and only fairly reliable instruments, remembering also that men of their time relied largely upon rum for sustenance in the wilderness or anywhere else, we'll have to admit that they did a pretty fair job.

Still, looking critically at the map of the township which we know as "Newport," there are some questions we'd like very much to ask these old surveyors. Having laid out "Claremont" in a fairly regular rectangle, why did they have to give "Newport" such a decided twist? To be sure, north of here the westward setting of the Connecticut River in its progress southward, made a shifting base, but at this point the river is fairly straight, and it is hard to see why the North and South boundaries of the town couldn't have progressed in a fairly straight course from those of Claremont. But they didn't. And do not. If they did our north line would include Croydon Flat and our south boundary would have cut Route 10 somewhere near the Red School House.

As it is, the town presents a decided lozenge shape on the map, with the east side a bit longer than the west. But in the course of time it transpired that the settlers had ideas of their own about these matters and some of them doctored the original layout to suit their own purposes. Croydon and Grantham, for instance, arranged to have their own west lines coincide roughly with the top of the Croydon-Grantham mountain range, and rearranged their eastern boundaries to make more homogenous townships.

Further north up in Grafton County, violent quarrels arose between towns as to just what belonged to each of them, resulting in long dawn-out lawsuits.

Newport, however, in all these 200 years has made but one major change, which resulted in the seemingly erratic jig-saw arrangement of our southeast corner, which describes a scalloped sort of line and comes to a point nowhere. This, was no fault of the original survey, but came from the desire of certain folk, living in the township of Goshen, to set up for themselves, which was accomplished in 1790 or thereabouts, with no objection from Newport or from Sunapee, which furnished some of Goshen's territory, and only mild remonstrance from Lempster, which was shorn of the rest.

By great good fortune the comparatively small stream which somehow got to be known as "The Sugar River," came just about in the center of this township and near the junction of the main stream with its two tributaries, the North and South branches. The main river, which forms the outlet of "Great Sunapee Pond," as the early maps have it, makes a rapid descent down the 250-foot fall into Newport, then wanders for two miles through the Newport meadows, and finally makes its escape toward the Connecticut through a narrow pass at Chandler's near the Claremont line. The river picks up a considerable reinforcemment from its South Branch, then runs a mile or more north to gain a second increment from the Croydon Branch—then hurries on its way westward through the big gap.

The first settlers unerringly picked the wide meadows thus formed, for their village. Whether they, or any of them, appreciated the unsurpassed beauty of the spot is an open question. Probably not. For there were too many trees in the way for them to gain a real look at the big mountain which forms the northern limit of the view, and it may well be doubted if they looked beyond the obvious advantage of good soil for their crops and good water power for their milling, to worry about scenic effects. Not only did the Sugar River form this big cross in the town's center, but the four corners of

their territory were occupied by high hills and high table lands, which served to round out the diversification of their new domain.

Thus we see, "The Sugar River" as the really central feature of their region, furnishing water, drainage, fishing, swimming, and a lot of other things, including floods, drownings and other undesirable things, which caused the frugal settlers plenty of unwelcome worry and expense. Town history says that our stream was named owing to the numbers of sugar maples growing along its banks. Maybe so. But the inhabitants further down the river had a different explanation. According to them "sugar" should be spelled something like "Shugar," because that was the name of a rascally old Indian, a chief presumably, who ruled these parts before the white man arrived. So the river has two names and it must be owned that reinforced as it is while traversing the town, it may well deserve a longer name when it reaches the fair meadows and considerable falls of the Claremont area. But Newport still calls it the "Sugar River" and has sometimes written poems in its honor, although the railroad people, many years after, trying to snake a railroad through here, called it by other and less poetical names. And it must be admitted that had Deacon Wilcox and his companions possessed the second sight and had visualized the situation created by the dozen mills and the several thousand people now living and working along here, "Sugar" river might well have given place to some other and less poetic appelation. Maybe they'd have called it "hemlock," which variety of tree seems really to far outnumber the maple; and besides makes a brew which the ancient Greeks recognized as anything but sweet and life-giving.

How to sweeten up all these rivers—the Sugar is by no means exceptional—is one of the important problems facing this generation. It can be done all right, but at what looks like prohibitive expense. Perhaps the answer is to be found in state action. Perhaps we must turn to the Federal authority. Or, most likely, a combination

of these echelons of government. Right now, we are resting on the polite fiction of "no further pollution."

First and last passenger trains through Newport. Concord and Claremont branch of the Boston and Maine Railroad. Embers from old locomotives like this one, puffing through the countryside, started many fires. Note majestic cowcatcher on Old No. 8. At bottom, locomotives no longer necessary, the last train was a Budd Car.

CHAPTER V

How a Country Milliner Became a Great Editor and Lived to the Age of Ninety-four

This is the story of Sarah Jane Buell. You have heard of her under another name—two other names, in fact, one acquired, I suspect, as a literary expedient, the other by marriage. Gordon Buell was her father's name, one of the many Buells who came here from Killing-would be a good place in which to regain it, and clearing worth, Conn. This one, however, didn't come with the others but arrived here after the Revolution, in which he had served as a staff captain under General Gates—a service in which he lost his health. He thought that clearing a 400-acre farm was a good way to do it.

He married Martha Whittlesey after the war and when ready to come to Newport. The date was 1783, and Martha was 32. It appears that the wedding had been postponed until after the hostilities. Sarah was the second of four children. The Whittleseys were themselves a distinguished family, and it might be suspected that Sarah got much of her talent from her mother and later, some of her preferment. The mother died in 1811 at less than 60 years of age.

Sarah was born in 1788, probably over on the Buell farm, which was in the East end of town on the stage road to Bradford. Gordon Buell came into the village about 1811 and built the Rising Sun Tavern, which still stands near the South Church. Like many superior young women, Sarah appears to have had trouble in finding a suitable husband, and it was not until the arrival here of David Hale, a young lawyer, that one was found. Sarah was 25 when she was married—rather late, but still younger than was her mother. The marriage appears to have been a very happy one, David, as Sarah afterward said, "being much my superior in education." They undertook a course of study together, and when he died in 1822, Sarah, an avid student, was ready to follow a literary career. But by that time she had five children, the eldest but eight years old.

David at the time of his death was Master of the Masonic Lodge, and the Masons, more charitable then than later, contributed money enough to set her up as a milliner in company with her sister-in-law, Hanna Hale. That the millinery venture was not a financial success is easily understood, for it was only the next year that the young widow published her first book "Northwood," one of the very first novels written by a woman to be published in America. This was in 1823, and the success of this work was so notable that five years later she was appointed editor, or "editoress," to use the language of the day, of the Ladies Magazine published in Boston. She lived in Boston until 1841 when, her children having finished college, she joined the great publisher, Lewis Godey, in Philadelphia, and lived there the rest of her long and active life as the editor of Godey's Ladies Book, most famous of the early women's magazines.

Mrs. Hale's achievements were stupendous. "Northwood" was current reading for 25 years, and was translated into 20 languages. Her "Woman's Record," an account of the life of almost every notable woman throughour the ages, was a book of more than 1,200 pages. She wrote about 30 other books and various poems, aside from her magazine output. Never for one moment did she forget that her chief objective was advancement of the cause of women. But she was always gentle about it, never obtrusive, never rampant. She was no Carrie Nation. She did not go around smashing saloons, or anything else. But she was ever on the job. And the present uninhibited status of women in our civilization was with no exaggeration and no doubt whatever due to her tireless efforts.

But Sarah Hale's current fame doesn't so much hang on her sustained efforts for women, valuable though they were and are, but rather on her authorship of a little poem which captured the imagination of the world, and still holds it. This was the nursery rhyme "Mary and the Lamb." The authenticity of this little poem has been in question now for many years. How-

ever, a few years ago Henry Ford detailed a man—his antique buyer, to investigate and find out the true facts of the controversy between Sarah Hale and the proponents of one Rollstone, whose claim to the authorship was entwined with the corresponding claims of one Mary Sawyer, of Sterling, Mass., who was said to be the original Mary of the poem. Now listen to the indisputable facts in the case:

In the year 1823, while Sarah was eking out a living for herself and five small children, being publicity minded, she published a small volume entitled "Poems for Children." One of the poems in this collection was entitled "Mary and the Lamb." Books for children were scarce in those days, the volume was immensely popular and but three copies of the original edition are known to exist—one in the Boston Public Library, one in the New Hampshire Historical Society, and one more somewhere else.

Here is the poem "Mary and the Lamb" staring in the face any who wish to see, appearing at a date years before the Rollstone-Sawyer incident is supposed to have taken place. What would you have for proof? The poem was and is Sarah Hale's. She has said so herself and Sarah was a great person, whose say-so is not to be disregarded for that of some antique dealer even though he happens to have at his disposal the purse and prestige of Henry Ford.

Like to see a copy of this early production "Poems for Children?" It would be difficult. Newport's Richards Free Library has a copy, but it is not an original. It is a reprint gotten out by Richard Hale of Boston some years ago. Richard Hale was not a relative—only a great admirer of the "authoress." The modest book of children's poems was an instant success, and ran into several editions. It is a collector's item now, and literally worth its weight in gold. Every summer collectors drop in at my house asking to see our books. After glancing casually over a number of ancient volumes, they ask if we have anything by Mrs. Hale. So we go into the story of the children's book and say that surely there ought

to be a copy here, but there is none. Then they exclaim "Oh, you know too much." Maybe **you** know where there lies a copy that the kids mislaid before it was worn to tatters. Good piece of change for you if you do. Maybe a thousand dollars.

While struggling with millinery, Mrs. Hale next plunged into writing "Northwood," which is a picture of life on the American continent of the early 20th century. And for the most part it is a true picture. Many of the scenes are laid in her native Newport. How could it have been otherwise when we remember that, so far as we know, she had rarely, if ever, travelled out of it? "Northwood" is, even now, fair reading, though I wouldn't recommend it unless one had an interest in its author.

The book was directly responsible for Mrs. Hale's removal to Boston and being chosen to conduct "The Ladies Magazine," one of the first publications devoted to the interests of women. Sarah was then 35 years old. Of this venture the late Ruth E. Finley, author of the most careful study of Mrs. Hale's career so far to appear, well says: "Only less remarkable than her accomplishments is the fact that this woman was 38 years old before she started on her career. All her accomplishments took place after she was 40. All her life had been spent in the town where she was born."

During most of the years included in Mrs. Hale's married life in Newport the family lived in a long house on the west side of Main St. on the spot now used for the "Library House," long the residence of John McCrillis, Clerk of Court. The place looks out upon the very end of the Common. It interested me very much when, several years ago, the high school youngsters undertook as a winter carnival stunt a heroic statue of Sarah Hale. It stood about 12 feet high. That the statue was built directly in front of the author's old residence was probably pure accident, and would have been news to any of the sculptors. Unfortunately, the work was hardly finished when a warm so'wester rolled in and in a few hours the statue's head disappeared. It was remarked that this was the only time on record when Sarah lost

her head. About the turn of the century the house was moved up Main to Myrtle, where it still stands. It appears at some time to have had a two-room addition built on what was the south end, and one wonders if this were not put on in Sarah's day to take care of an increasing family. I know it was there in the 1890's when the Rev. Dockerill of the Methodist Church (right across the Common) lived there.

The departure of the widow Hale and her five children for Boston must have been an event of community-wide interest. It was unheard of in several respects. "What did she propose to do?" "Edit a Woman's Magazine." Pshaw! "How get a living for herself and family?" "Write poems and such." "Rubbish. She'd starve unless . . ." Thus thought skeptical and not over-charitable Newport. Nevertheless, she went. I'm wondering what my own grandfather, and even more his own wife —another Sarah—thought about it. They were young too, at the time, and perhaps hopeful and liberally progressive.

Sarah herself seems to have had no doubts, no hesitations. She was new to Boston and found herself vastly disturbed by conditions which were just old hat to the natives. So she plunged into matters with an enthusiasm which afterward was recognized as characteristic. First she had to get The Ladies Magazine on its way, and launching a new publication then took even more of what it takes than now—a large order. But she succeeded and soon built up a circulation second only to Godey's. Then she turned herself loose. Bunker Hill monument had been dedicated on the 50th anniversary of the battle, but 20 years later had progressed upward but 40 feet. LaFayette had wielded the trowel, Daniel Webster had made one of his greatest speeches. It was all to be done by private subscription and tho but $100,000 was needed, that was a great deal of money in those days. It was proposed that some money be scraped up, the monument taken down and the grand project abandoned.

And then came a little woman from Newport, New

Hampshire, who proposed that The Women take hold. She organized the greatest fair even seen in Boston at that time. More than 4,000 people came to the opening. In seven days, according to Ruth Finley, $75,000 had been cleared, and the rest was easy. Among other things, it appears that Mrs. Hale, in connection with this matter, had invented the first rummage sale. Well, the monument was at length finished and dedicated—Senator Webster again making a great speech. If you go into Boston the right way, you can still see the colorings on the stone work just where the original monument leaves off and Sarah Hale's monument begins. Really a great and lasting triumph.

Somewhere along the line she found time to organize and push to success the Seaman's Aid Society. This effort was in the field of reform—a new venture for her. It seems that seamen were being exploited in the buying of equipment for their voyages, and their families often left in want for long periods. She enlisted help and corrected all this, not without raising the hostility of those who had profited by the original system. The Seaman's Aid was a tremendous success. But time and space forbid that we try to relate even a fraction of Sarah's achievements. Mrs. Finley has made a complete summary for us, which we cannot do better than quote:

"She was responsible for Thanksgiving as a national holiday.

"She was the early champion of elementary education for girls equal to that for boys, and of higher education for women.

"She was the first to advocate women as teachers in the public schools.

"As the friend and advisor of Matthew Vassar, she helped organize Vassar College.

"She put the term 'domestic science' into the language.

"She began the fight for the retention of property rights for married women.

"She founded the first society for the advancement of women's wages — the reduction of child labor.

"She started the first day-nursery, boon to working mothers.

"First to stress the need for physical training for women.

"Among the first to suggest public playgrounds.

"She organized and for many years was President of The Seamen's Aid, and established the first Sailors' Home.

"She sent out the first women medical missionaries.

"She raised the money to finish Bunker Hill Monument.

"She rescued the movement to preserve Mount Vernon as a national memorial.

"She was the author of some two dozen books and hundreds of poems, including the best know children's rhyme in the English language—'Mary Had a Little Lamb.'

"She was the first woman editor in the country, and for 40 years presided over Godey's Ladies Book, the most widely circulated magazine of her times."

Tremendous. TREMENDOUS. No wonder she died at the comparatively young age of 91, without a grey hair in her head. She never wore glasses in her life.

In all this long and busy story of success one might wonder, as I have, whether she completely forgot her native place and its associations. The town history, in telling about the celebration of 1845, when the town paused a few moments to brag about itself a little, say that "an original poem, written for the occasion by Mrs. Sarah J. Hale, was 'deaconed' after the ancient style, and sung by the congregation to the tune of 'Old Hundred'." However, the account make no mention of the writer being here in person. It was with joy, therefore, that

when fixing up an account of the South Church anniversary a few years ago I came across evidence that Mrs. Hale was here, but also that she wrote a detailed account of her trip. In it she gives a pleasant account of the town with its three churches, but speaks in especially eloquent terms of the splendid sermon delivered by the Rev. Baron Stowe of Boston (Baptist)—a native of Newport. "It was worth a trip of 400 miles," she said, "to listen to such noble eloquence."

Then she started back to Philadelphia. And of this journey she had plenty to report. In the first place, it was a tremendously hot July day. The roads were rough,and in one place, while the coach stood out in the broiling sun, the driver was obliged to replace a thole pin, which was the contraption holding the pole in place. The driver got her baggage mixed up and her trunk did not arrive in Nashua, where she was transferring to steam cars, for another two days. She boarded the cars at last, satisfied with stage coach travel for quite a while.

Anyway, it is gratifying to learn that the mighty Sarah was here, and a bit puzzling to understand why, as she was doubtless the lion of the day, the historian failed to make any mention of it save that her hymn was "deaconed." We'd be interested to know where she stayed and how long. But we'd be particularly interested to learn why, when she was here, she appears to have made no effort to visit the graves of her husband and parents, who to this day lie in the old Pine St. cemetery unhonored and unsung save for the record inscribed upon the Buell monument, erected some 40 years later by James Buell, a New York banker native to Newport. A DAR marker invariably stands in front of it, in honor of Capt. Gordon Buell, said to lie 16 feet transversely southwest from the monument, and of David Hale, Master of Corinthian Lodge, A & FM, who was without doubt buried with great ceremony, but where, exactly nobody now knows. Anyway, David Hale, though his grave may be lost, like that of another famous Mason, had the honor of being, for eight years, the husband of the greatest woman ever born in America.

Through several decades she was the unchallenged arbiter of manners and good taste in America. She was the Emily Post of the mid-century. What she said about good form was law. And she had at her command an unparalleled medium of expression. Godey's had, just before the Civil War, a circulation of 150,000 a month. It had no effective competitors.

Why, then, if this is true—and it is—is Sarah Josepha Hale known today only as the author of a charming nursery jingle? Why does she not stand out among the great women of America? Unfortunately, when her fame seemed most secure, and her advice on any subject was eagerly sought, an issue arose on which she had no opinion, and that issue was at that time, the ONLY one before the people. It was the Civil War, or, if you must, the War between the States. Sarah Hale was the best equipped woman in the nation to advise the women how to make themselves most effective in the trying days ahead. She said nothing. Nation over, women banded together to scrape lint and sew Haverlocks. They wanted counsel from Sarah. None came. How much of this was chargeable to Lewis Godey we can only guess. But Sarah's attitude was that if we don't talk about this horrid war the war will go away and leave us to our ivory tower undisturbed. Only, it turned out that it wasn't that kind of war. It was a blow from which Sarah Hale's prestige never recovered.

CHAPTER VI

TURNPIKES

Until very lately the word "turnpike" had pretty much gone out of use in this part of the country, inasmuch as turnpikes themselves had ceased to exist. Curiously enough, the original meaning had not to do so much with a road as with the gate which it controlled. The customary bar to a private road was a pike which turned, letting people through, but not animals. The word gradually came to mean a road — a toll road. And so people came to say "turnpike road" — and finally, "turnpike."

At the beginning of the century there was, in this part of the country, quite a craze for turnpike roads built by private companies. It followed an old English idea that turnpikes built by private companies would save the public treasury, and be a source of profit. Let those who used the roads pay the bills. Just now (1961) we are in the midst of another phase of the same idea. It didn't work too well in the early eighteen hundreds; it remains to be seen whether in the last half of the twentieth century the idea, even with some improvements, will work any better.

So, as a phase of this movement there was chartered under the laws of New Hampshire a company to build "a turnpike" from Stony Brook, in Lebanon, down through Grantham, Croydon, Newport, Goshen, etc. to Hillsboro. The road actually was built in 1806. What became so important to Newport was that the engineers in charge of routing the turnpike elected, upon reaching the south Croydon line, to push straight south, thus avoiding Newport village perched upon the western edge of the valley of the Sugar River. In this way they would head straight across the eastern end of the "first division of lots" and cross the Sugar River but once, avoiding two dangerous river crossings. The flimsy bridges they had to build were easily washed out. Expense had to be always avoided. In this way they made a bee line for Goshen, Mill Village; Newport would still be within striking distance.

What happened must have far exceeded their expectations. Newport, slowly expanding its industry, began to abandon its first plan of making a trading center along Pine St., which had been carefully laid out eight rods wide for the purpose, and began with some deliberation to move over onto the new turnpike. Water power was also a factor, for to the eastward of the turnpike the river tumbled down over fall upon fall, offering millsites all along. Benjamin Giles had been the first to take advantage of this land and had located his saw and grist mills three miles toward Sunapee Lake, the river's source, and the settlers had aided him by building the second road in town so that all could reach his mills.

Daniel Dudley, with shops at "Southville" was the first to follow him and soon the move was in full swing. Thus relocated, Newport village stayed put. The village was securely anchored in its present location. Thriving starts which had been made to the south and to the north at the foot of Baptist hill, aferward North Newport, or, Northville as it became in the early railroad days, dried up, and things began to boom over in the center of the valley.

William Cheney, whose quick eye was not slow to take advantage of every situation, and who originally had opened his store near the foot of Claremont hill, moved over to a new location. So did James Breck, originally a Croydon merchant. But he came to a halt further south (at the corner of Main and Elm) and a long contest ensued, with each man doing his best to make his own location the premier spot for all kinds of activity.

James Breck was no mean antagonist, remember, but David Lewis Yale writing long afterward said concerning this contest that James Breck had his way in locating the new meeting house near his store at the south end but "William Cheney was not idle. At about this time he gave land for a Baptist church and led in rushing it to completion. The interesting contest between the two factions did not end unil 1826, when James Breck and William Forsaith joined forces in building the Eagle Hotel (Eagle Apartments) north of the river.

This was a surrender. The more vigorous initiative of William Cheney had won. But the few years when the issue was uncertain were stirring times. This short summary explains why our church stands apart from the center of the present town."

Even so late as the middle of the century it was unwise for a south end boy to becaught alone north of the Main Street Bridge, and vice versa, unless he dared risk "a fite." Of course, these boys had long ago forgotten what it was all about, if they ever knew — but that was no help if one were spotted. That's what my father used to say and he ought to know, having been born, a north-end boy, in 1849.

A curious sequel to this story of development is found in very recent history. The old "South" church was moved down Unity Road to the farm of William Davis (the old Ben Giles place — now Fryer) and used as a barn until the place became part of the Newport Golf Club. It was then torn down to make room for a shop. I strolled in one day. It surely had a noble frame. Some of the beams were painted part way 'round. The frame stood as straight and square as when built half a mile away.

So 1806 is a good year to remember in local history. But that wasn't the only turnpike year. On March 12, 1812, the town voted to subscribe $1,500 toward the cost of building another turnpike, from the Croydon road (Airport) westward through North Newport and over Cornish Mountain to the covered bridge in Cornish. Later, maybe the next year, the town cancelled this vote and was promptly sued by the turnpike corporation (which, remember, was a private company). The town was defeated and had to pay up. Maybe it served us right. But then again, maybe this is too late to judge properly. It appears that still another turnpike was built down around the south end of Lake Sunapee. If so, it seems to have been unknown to legend, but probably it really existed. In an earlier chapter you have met Zephaniah Clark. Zephaniah was the first resident of

Newbury and his new Inn stood on this turnpike near Spectacle Pond or Mountainview Lake.

When you find a house standing unnaturally close to the road you may be fairly sure that originally it was a gate house for the collection of tolls. Such a house stands half way across the meadow at the north end of Newport. It was the house of Arthur Wilmarth, and later became that of Mr. Sanborn, both dairymen. We have heard that later on, say on the Fourth of July or other occasion when there was an unusually plentiful supply of "likker," the boys used to let off steam by throwing the toll gate into the nearest river. While unofficial, this probably reflected a general attitude common to most of the people. As usual a general attitude prevailed; there developed general dissatisfaction with the condition of the roads, and in 1838, according to Wheeler, the turnpikes were given up and tax-supported free roads laid out in their stead. One more touch and I'm through with turnpikes. The History of Newport (p.85) says that the Cornish Turnpike was laid out "by way of Governor's Pond in the northwest corner of the town." This may be worth mentioning as it is the only reference I've ever run across to this body of water, near the corner of the great Corbin Park. But it can be found on any good local map. Some of it may be in Croydon.

As to other roads of the period, 25 years after the first settlement, the Proprietors built a road to Claremont. Then, after 1834, another road, following the river from Kelleyville, was built to Claremont, and this was known as "the new road" — the other was "the old road." Then, when the state took over the roads, and route 103 was organized, this "old road," improved and relocated in spots, became "the new road"; the "new road" became "the old road." It is all very confusing unless you know how these things happened.

Bridges at first were a trial to the flesh. They were often built in two spans, connecting with a trestle in the middle. These were eternally washing out and required rebuilding. That's why the turnpike people

were so anxious to avoid the valley crossings even at the expense of avoiding Newport village. These bridges were by no means the old "covered" bridges now so carefully preserved. Our first covered bridge is said to have been built at Kelleyville, 1839. In time there were 10 or 12 covered bridges spanning the Sugar River or its tributaries. Only one of these is now standing — the Corbin Bridge west of the airport. This is in a good state of repair and ought to last for many years. A few years ago, when all teaming was on runners, the sleds, loaded to the right capacity for slipping along the well snowed roads, were up against a tough drag when a covered bridge was encountered. Of course there was no snow inside these structures unless the teamsters, or the town, or somebdy, took pains to cart or shovel it in. In the summer, too, with all horse or ox drawn vehicles, the covered bridges became pretty strong. I recall that the bridge on Elm Street, one of the last to go, could, according to local say-so, be detected via the nose as far away as the foot of Claremont hill. They were not popular with people living nearby.

After this, roads began to appear in all sorts of places until the network was pretty complete. But this brought a new complaint. It was commonly said, especially among those chronically set on finding fault with the human race (of which we still have more than a few) that "everybody was on the road" travelling on foolish errands instead of staying at home minding his business. And this, mind you, 70 or 80 or 90 years before the first automobile commenced its pre-ordained mission of polluting the atmosphere. Advent of the first stage line, operating over the new roads between Windsor and Newport on the way to Boston, was an event of uncommon interest. About 1830 rival stage routes began to appear, and the competition became severe. It is related that at one period rival stages, operating through Newport, not only carried passengers free, but Captain Russ' line also paid the passengers' grog bills at the wayside taverns. Them was the happy days?! From about 1830 to the opening of the railroad era in 1876, passengers from Newport to Boston "staged it" to Bradford, the rail-head

after 1848, then taking to the cars proceeded merrily the rest of the way — provided the passenger didn't get a cinder in his eye, which somewhat damaged the pleasure of the trip.

But stage lines did not solve the problems of freight. After the first of the century, when the land space was pretty well filled and progress and industry began to bear their proper fruit, there came to be a large surplus of farm products. There was no near-by market of non-farming people ready to buy. So the hardy farmers gathered their surplus, combined their transportation resources, and set out for Boston or Salem, where a ready market existed. Gradually, as the road extended toward the ports, side roads contributed their quota of teams until, in the language of an early historian, "The roads were jammed with pod teams, josteling each other" on the road to Boston. In time, six or eight-horse teams were common, and industry was divided into those who produced the goods and those who delivered to the places where wanted. It is a matter of record that in 1833 "there were six large teams of heavy horses making regular trips between this place and Boston."

For the every-day purposes of travel there were, in the early days, two methods; one was to go on horseback, a method to which the paths or roads were well adapted, the other was to go afoot — a method to which the byways were even better adapted.

So Newport was turned bottom-side-up by the building of a new road. It was served even worse nearly a century later when the West Side Road, or the Dartmouth College road was organized and the Claremont Eagle, stung because Governor Quimby had routed the thoroughfare through Newport rather than Claremont, in mentioning the towns through which it passed left Newport out altogether, or, as Olin H. Chase's Republican Champion said, " . . . it leaves Goshen, and jumping the hole where Newport used to be . . . " However, we've one more incident to recount before coming to "The Founding of the County of Sullivan."

The old and the new. Four generations of public buildings. In the rear, old Sullivan County Court House; far left, Town Hall and Court House; center, new County Records Building; right, foreground, Newport's Municipal Building.

Pollard's Mills, where combination grist and saw mill was operated by water power. The Sugar River that served the mill well for many years finally carried it off in a spring flood.

CHAPTER VII

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Newport folk seem to have actually gotten down to the business of founding a new settlement just 10 years before the American Revolution came upon them in 1776. A Committee of Safety had already been appointed consisting of Benjamin Giles, Aaron Buell, Jesse Lane, Josiah Stevens, Jesse Wilcox and Robert Lane. A report dated August 16, 1776 gives this interesting information: "The number of able-bodied effective men in the township of Newport is 36 the number of muskets fit for service is 14, the muskets that are not fit, five, which will be made fit forthwith. Seventeen muskets wanted."

It appears, therefore, than in 10 years the town's male population had increased from eight to 30. Percentage-wise, this indicates a healthy growth. In March, 1776 the Continental Congress had sent out a request that all citizens be required to sign the "Association Test," which was worded as follows—

> "We, the subscribers, do hereby solemnly engage, and promise that we will to the utmost of our power, at the risque of our lives and fortunes, with arms, oppose the Hostile Proceedings of the British Fleets and Armies against the United Colonies."

Headed by the redoubtable Benjamin Giles, the oldest and richest settler, this paper was signed by 34 settlers, four more than were named as the total population, and the then Selectmen, Josiah Stevens, Samuel Hurd and Aaron Buell, certified to the colony's Committee of Safety that these were ALL "that is requested" to sign the pledge. They implied, without exactly saying so, that there were no Tories in our midst. This claim was amply justified during the course of the Revolutionary struggle by the fact that 26 men from Newport are credited with some measure of field service, although necessarily not many of them became "Continentals" and their service consisted of short periods of enlistment

—all they could do and still give due care to their young farms and families.

In 1777 a company of 20 men left town to march over the hills to help overwhelm General Burgoyne's detachment at Bennington or Ticonderoga. They appear to have arrived too late for the battle. It was this sort of thing which caused Gen. Burgoyne to report "the Grants hang like a thunder cloud on my Left." And to this small band belongs the credit of being the first such expedition to leave the valley of the Sugar River in defense of the country. Following them, it is a striking fact that throughout our history as a nation, whenever the drums have beat and the bugles cried in alarm, Newport has responded with an organized body of men, armed, equipped and officered. It is a proud record and we must give the initial credit to Captain Parmelee and his valient 20.

One of the interesting incidents of Revolutionary days was the fact that Benjamin Bragg (not to be confused with Benjamin Giles) one of the original party of settlers, who owned the farm at the foot of Claremont Hill (this belonged for a later 100 years to the Fairbanks family), was named on a committee to deal with Tories. Of course, there was a considerable clamor to have all loyalists expelled and to cause their property to be seized for the benefit of patriot citizens. Governor Wentworth himself was forced to flee to Halifax. One wonders whatever became of his lands in Newport. However, it somewhere has been reported that Mr. Bragg administered his office with so much moderation that the Tories—doubtless estimable though mistaken people, were saved much unnecessary suffering.

We may take Captain Gordon Buell, father of Sarah Buell Hale, as an example of what followed. Captain Buell finished the war as an officer of General Horatio Gates' army, in which capacity he served at Saratoga and Stillwater. He came back broken in health and settled in Newport. His farm was over on East Mountain on the old Bradford Road. That is where Sarah Josepha, the third of four children, was born. Her brother, Horatio,

was one of the earliest graduates of Dartmouth College, possibly the first from Newport. Gordon, he spelled it "Gurden," according to Revolutionary records, gave up farming his 400 acres after some years, came into the village and built the Rising Sun Tavern, which still stands on South Main Street, the third house North of the church. We are using him as an example of the very large number of Revolutionary veterans who settled here in the years following the war.

It will be noticed that the Governor's charter for Newport is countersigned by "Benjamin Giles, Proprietor's Clerk." Just how Giles arrived in the settlement of Newport is not now clear. He came from Groton, Connecticut, and was not only older than the other settlers, but appears to have been a man of considerable means. At all events he was the most able among the settlers, and soon was, as we have already seen by the names subscribed to the Association Test, the acknowledged leader. Joseph Parmelee's account of the History of Newport contained in the History of Cheshire and Sullivan Counties gives the only extended account of his life:

> "Benjamin Giles was a man of good natural ability, well educated (had) a fair estate with much experience in Human Affairs. He was, for the time and place in which he acted, a strong man, and his influence in all matters social, political and religious —was controlling and recognized in all the affairs of the community. No name appears upon the town records oftener than that of Benjamin Giles.
>
> "His influence was not confined to his own town but extended to other towns, and was felt in the councils of the state.
>
> "At an adjourned meeting, holden on the 29th day of October (1767) at the house of Zephaniah Clark, aforesaid, by the Proprietors—Voted that Benjamin Giles, now resident in Newport, have 100 acres of land—so laid out as to secure to said Giles —that part of the East Branch of Great Sugar River, so called, near where said Giles is about to

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> set up a Corn Mill and saw mill, so that Giles may build a Dam across said River, with all the privileges of said river, so far as is necessary for the benefit of said mills, with land adjoining said river, so far as is necessary for the benefit of s'd mills—and also to be so laid out as to take in a part of the White Pine Timber, and also to Procure a Pair of Mill Stones for said Giles at said Mills. And that said Giles have a tax or rate to the value of Four days Labor on each Proprietor's Right or Share, the aforesaid Grants given for said Giles encouragement towards the building of the aforesaid Mills in Newport."

This was the beginning of our present village or suburb of Guild. A stone pier may still be seen from the little bridge spanning the River just above the present Dorr Woolen Mill. This was part of the original foundation of the first Grist and Saw Mill, which was completed in 1768. When it is considered that up to this time in order to have a bag of corn converted into meal it was necessary to travel the long road to Charlestown and back, and with no saw mill it was impossible to get boards other than hand-hewn to build a simple door, we can understand why the settlers gave themselves up to a restrained rejoicing when Mr. Giles' enterprise finally blossomed into reality.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TIME NEWPORT SECEDED

There is, however, considerable mystery as to just how Giles became "Proprietor's Clerk." He seems not to have been related to Deacon Wilcox or other settlers, except that two daughters, Mary and Hannah, married Christopher and Isaac Newton, who afterward became important men here. Christopher and Isaac were cousins, came here very early, but whether their coming was an effect or a cause of Benjamin's presence here, we do not know. The first we hear of him was in relation to the charter, or a copy thereof, where, at the end, it says: "A true copy, Benj'n Giles, Proprietor's Clerk."

There is one other glimpse of this matter in an old story that the first article of merchandise brought into town was a barrel of rum, for which the settlers had contributed various sums, in unequal portions. The narrative goes on to say that the rum could not be divided previous to the arrival of Mary, wife of Christopher Newton, because she alone had mathematical skill to figure out how much belonged to each. It is hoped she was not long delayed since the settlers' appetite for rum could not long be held in check by such a flimsy excuse. This also gives a severe jolt to the widely believed story that women in those days rarely had learning. It seems to be one of those things—sometimes so and sometimes not so.

It seems on the whole that the presence here of Benjamin Giles with his well lined pockets must be credited to the care and protection of an all-wise providence, since he seems just naturally to have appeared, and it is evident that the Newport settlers would have been hard put to it for survival had he not been here.

Parmlee points out, in his interesting narrative which represents Newport in the History of Cheshire and Sullivan Counties (1886) that our settlers labored to found a community with very little regard to the wants of future historians, and for this reason accounts of the earliest times are few and meager. Joseph

Parmelee himself, who was born here in 1818, gives us perhaps the only account of this man Giles. He says:

> "The name and character of Benjamin Giles deserves more than a passing notice . . . It is a matter for regret that the data extant from which to construct a sketch of his life is so meager and desultory. It is thus with many interesting lives, whose only written history is found upon the stone that marks the place of their long-buried remains.
>
> "He died in 1787 at the age of 70 years. He must, therefore, have been born in 1717, and at the time of his arrival in Newport, was 50 years of age. He was an Irishman by birth, and in the course of his wanderings by sea and land had come to Groton, Conn., where he was settled and from whence he came to Newport. His family consisted of daughters—two by a first marriage, and one by a second wife, lately deceased. Of the first, Mary married Christopher Newton and Hannah was the wife of Isaac Newton. These Newtons were cousins and came to Newport in 1779, with their families, where they lived and died. The daughter of the second marriage, Ruth, came to Newport with her father. She was possessed, in her own right, of considerable property, inherited from her mother.
>
> "A third wife, married after coming here, was Abagail Hubbard, of Charlestown, who survived him. There were no children by this marriage.
>
> "Benjamin Giles was a man of good natural ability, well educated, a fair estate, with much experience in human affairs. He was, for the time and place in which he acted, a strong man, and his influence in all matters—social, political and religious—was controlling and recognized in all the affairs of the community. His influence was not confined to his own town, but was felt in the councils of the state.
>
> "The difference between the colonies and the mother country, already foreshadowed revolution, and wisdom and intelligence were needed in all councils. He was a lover of liberty, and an enthusi-

astic friend of the Patriot cause, a true Irishman with pronounced American proclivities.

"After the downfall and flight of the Royal Governor, John Wentworth, New Hampshire was without an organized state government. By a concerted movement on the part of the towns, a convention was called to meet at Exeter, 1775, '76, for the purpose of organizing a provisional government, for the time, or during the war. To this convention Benjamin Giles was sent as representative of six classed towns, Newport, Unity, Acworth, Lempster, Croydon and Saville (Sunapee).

"He was chosen by the House of Representatives—one of a committee of 12 to constitute an upper house, or Senate. Mesech Weare, the first governor of the state, was the presiding officer of this body, an assembly to which only the ablest men of the colony were called.

"In the year 1778, the controversy between New Hampshire and Vermont in regard to the boundary line assumed formidable proportions. Conventions were held at Cornish, Walpole and Windsor, Vt., to consider the matter. To these conventions he was sent as a delegate.

"He favored the claims of Vermont, as instructed by the town, at a meeting held March 29, 1781, when it was voted 'That the town of Newport join in Union with Vermont. That Benjamin Giles Esq. be a delegate to represent the town of Newport in the General Assembly of the State of Vermont, to be held at Windsor in April next ensuing. That Aaron Buell, Jesse Wilcox and Josiah Stevens be a committee to give instructions to the representative above named for his direction in the General Assembly of Vermont.'

"At another town meeting called in the same year, the town voted for state officers of Vermont and the meeting was called in the name of the State of Vermont.

"The excitement in regard to this matter became

so great that troops were called out and arrests made. Benjamin Giles and Nathaniel S. Prentice were arrested by the New Hampshire authorities, and Enoch Hale, the Sheriff of Cheshire County, was arrested by the authorities of Vermont. Giles is said to have been rescued from the custody of Col. Hale, in Charlestown, by the 'people in a most extraordinary manner.'

"This difficulty was afterward amicably settled and the town of Newport returned to its allegiance to New Hampshire. The annual town meeting of March, 1782 was called in the name of the State of New Hampshire; otherwise the good people of Newport at this time, might have rejoiced as citizens of the Green Mountain State.

"To close the eventful history of this most prominent citizen of Newport during the Revolutionary period, we may take the reader, in imagination, to the first burial place of the town where nearly all 'the rude forefathers sleep' and read the stone that identifies his grave his short and simple annals—

"Erected in memory of ye
Honourable Benjamin Giles Esq.
who, after serving his Generation,
faithfully in publick life, then
departed this, in hopes of a better,
December 9th, 1787.

"Altho I sleep in dust a while,
"Beneath this barren clod,
"Ere long, I hope to rise and smile
"And see my savior, God."

There is a good deal more to this story of the "secession" of 16 New Hampshire towns, but we have not time to go into the matter. The history of Plainfield, however, gives light on the case by explaining that, it being war time, Vermont surveyors were mostly out of work and Vermont decreed that all New Hampshire lands would have to be re-surveyed **at the owner's expense**, whereupon the New Hampshire men hastily withdrew to their own side of the river and again became

citizens of "Newhampshire"—as it was usually spelled in the town records of the time.

Benjamin Giles lived five years after the close of these incidents and as we have seen, was buried under the name of "ye Honorable" Benjamin Giles, without the usual abbreviations, and it is noticeable that Wheeler, writing just about 100 years after his death, speaks of him in the same tone of respect—a procedure which he did not follow in the case of any other man.

While the grave of Benjamin is plainly marked, one looks in vain for any sign of his wife Abagail. She was considerably younger and, being both wealthy and comely, remained a widow but a short time, and then became the second wife of Deacon Josiah Stevens of South Church. With Ruth, whom we have met as one of Giles' three daughters, safely married to a prosperous young farmer, Abijah Wines, the widow and her new husband disposed of the house which still stands, almost on the golf links, Unity Road; and set off on a missionary journey. But instead of heading for China or some other far-off land to convert the heathen, they went to Star Island, Isles of Shoals, then fallen into a deplorable state, and there, if you knew just where to look, you would still find the low-lying prone grave stones which were erected to their memory. But we are going to hear more about this Josiah Stevens, and even more about Abijah Wines, who was a very early graduate of Dartmouth College.

If I have forgotten to mention that Benjamin Giles was redheaded, I'm sorry. He was, and so was his daughter Ruth, whose exploits in marrying all her six or seven daughters to ministers we believe to have been a very notable performance.

CHAPTER IX

WE BUILD A CHURCH

Two hundred years ago the 36 square miles of territory which now goes by the name of Newport, New Hampshire lay untenanted save by wild beasts. The American aboriginies, often swept away by famine and disease, were too few to people so much land. The better-equipped white man had not yet arrived. When the first settler came it was to find such a tangle of new and old forests that becoming lost in them was one of the real hazards of existence. Unless the white man, like his predecessor the red, intended to live by hunting and fishing, his first task was to clear away the forest cover and expose the surface of the earth, for the first time since the creation, to the light of he sun and the breezes of heaven. Also, while in this particular spot the native was not a problem, the wild beasts of the forest were many and formidable, as was found when the first party of settlers left a hoard of crops upon departure in the fall for their old homes in Connecticut and found it totally despoiled upon their return the next spring.

It is difficult to imagine the profound silence of this deep forest, a silence ages old, broken when the wind was down only by the voices of the wild denizens of the forest, the murmur of its various streams and the crashing of some ancient tree whose time had come to replenish the forest mould.

Surveyors, however, had swept through and made a rough division into townships and a royal governor had given out the land to "proprietors" who, in turn, had sold their rights to the settlers, or more correctly to their fathers. The first settlers here were from fairly well-to-do families. They came from long-settled Connecticut and were no more experienced in pioneering than you or I. It is not the purpose of this paper to recount their problems or their progress, but in the Autumn of 1779, after the crops had been stored and

everything made snug for the winter, some of the people thought it time to establish a church. To be sure, the Revolutionary War was still going on and would be for another three years, but Bennington and Saratoga had been won, Burgoyne and his army were prisoners of war, the treaties with France and Holland had been consummated, immediate danger of invasion, for a time a very real threat, was over. The war had moved to the South, where it would be terminated. To be sure, Capt. Samuel Hurd and others were still off fighting Indians, there were calls for supplies, but it seems that a feeling of security was in the air. Church and other pressing matters could now be attended to.

The incorporators of the church were 17 in number, headed by Robert Lane. You will remember that Deacon Stephen Wilcox was the original leader of the first group of settlers to invade and start clearing this area, but he, after seeing his sons and daughters well settled in their new homes, returned to Killingsworth, Conn., where most of them had lived. Robert Lane, probably the eldest of those remaining, was left as guiding spirit. Worship was held every Sabbath, mostly in his log cabin, conducted either by Benjamin Giles who, among other things, was the school master, or by Deacon Stevens. Robert Lane became the first signer of the Articles of Agreement upon which the church was founded, and, therefore, Member No. 1. The names of seven other men follow, and then the names of eight women. They were, in order, Daniel Dudley, Daniel Buell, Aaron Buell, Elias Bascom, Matthew Buell (Lieut.), Josiah Stevens, and Benjamin Giles. The women: Esther Buell, Susanna Dudley, Lydia Wilcox Hurd, Eunice Bascom, Mary Stevens, Hester Lane, Chloe Dudley Wilcox, Mary Buell, and Jane (Chalker) Buell.

After a while they met in the Proprietors' House, first public building in town, which was a general utility building about where Dr. Thorpe's residence now stands, but in 1793 a regular church building was begun. This building was on a small eminence at the very foot of Claremont hill. After a life of 25 years it was torn down

and the timbers erected into a barn that many of us can remember, over on Charles Fryer's meadow, now the golf course. On June 26, 1793 the frame was raised. The raising was doubtless in the traditional manner with a free flow of rum and a spirit of carnival. No early local happening is so well remembered as the death of the 18-year-old son of Elder Job Seamans of New London, who was among the many present. He was sent aloft to secure the "crown piece" and the building or a part of it fell, carrying young Seamans to his death. A stone was erected in memory of this event over in the old Pine Street cemetery and can still be seen. One wonders if he were really buried there or whether he was taken home over the rough trail to New London.

Before going on with the history and progress of the church, let us examine briefly the careers of these 17 original members, because they were regarded with sufficient veneration to cause their names to be set apart in a separate list on the occasion of the 50th anniversary, 1829, when the first church manual was printed.

Robert Lane lived to be 80 years old, dying the next year after the church was built; his wife, Hester, much younger, also lived to be 81; died in 1832. All four of their children were born in Lebanon, Conn., their old home.

Daniel Dudley and his wife Susanna. He was 59 at the time but lived to the age of 91. Susanna died ten years later, aged 68.

Daniel Buell and his wife Esther, the first woman signer, we have little record of, but the next signer was probably a brother.

Aaron Buell, who for reasons we know not of, was excommunicated the following year, but he lived to be 77. He was probably a widower at this time, although he eventually married a woman named Amy Park.

Elias Bascom and his wife Eunice Bascom both migrated to Orwell, Vermont, early in the 1790's. Their

six sons all took up professions. Elias lived to be 96 and Eunice 94.

Matthew Buell, who is always called "Lieutenant" from his service in the Revolution, died at 72. He and the Connecticut company that he raised all fought at Bunker Hill. Esther, his wife, came from Somers, Conn. Wheeler's history says of her, "She cultivated the happy faculty of always looking on the bright side of everything, and hence lived to enjoy the glories of one hundred and two summers." She died in 1842, the very last of this group to succumb to the demands of nature. They too were migrants to Orwell.

Josiah Stevens, "Deacon & Rev.," died on the Isles of Sholes in 1804 at the age of 61. He was but 36 at this signing—was among the younger members. His wife, Mary Gray of Killingsworth, died only five years later, 1783, and the Deacon married the widow of Benjamin Giles, became a missionary, and tackled the heroic task of redeeming the 600 inhabitants of the Isles, who were reported on the verge of cannibalism.

This brings us to Benjamin Giles himself, who, though the last to sign, was actually the only settler who had previously belonged to any church. He came from Groton, Mass., was older and far better off than the other settlers, represented these back-woods towns in the provincial legislature, and was our first "great" man. He built the Fryer house on Unity Road. He was a powerful influence in giving this community and this church a good start. His gravestone over in Pine Street cemetery is one of the most notable I know. It stands near the center of the yard, is bigger than its neighbors, and it says:

Erected in memory of the
Honorable BENJAMIN GILES, ESQ. who after
serving his generation faithfully in public
life then departed this in hopes of a better.
Dec. 9, 1787 Age 70 years.

Has anyone ever received a better gravestone?

Wheeler's history, printed a hundred years after his death, always refers to him as the **Honorable** Benjamin Giles. His widow, Abigail, married Rev. Josiah Stevens, and doubtless accompanied him to the islands and died there.

Returning to the list of women whose husbands are not of the 17, Lydia Wilcox Hurd, wife of Samuel Hurd, is next on the list. Samuel was one of the original eight young men who came into the town in 1766. Lydia was 45 years old and her family was intact when she joined the church. Her son Elnathan became a deacon, at that time a lifetime position. Capt. Samuel Hurd, her husband, Indian fighter, did not find time to join until 1799, becoming the 110th member.

Chloe Dudley Wilcox seems, next to the fabulous Mary Buell, to have outlived the rest of the group, having died in 1817. As she was but 65 at the time, she must have been the youngest of the group, probably about 30.

The last , Jane Chalker Buell, we know little about except that she died in 1810 at 75 and had a son, Chalker Buell, who was a prominent member and deacon some years later.

Of this group of 17 persons, only one, Giles, joined by letter. The rest, therefore, although mostly in middle life, had never belonged to a church.

Immediately the young church started a search for a pastor, but this did not prove easy of accomplishment owing, probably, to the meager suport these pioneers were able to offer. Finally, four years after the founding, an arrangement was made with the Rev. John Remele. There had in the meantime been about 20 accessions. Two who joined in 1782 were Ezra and Sybil Parmelee, original inhabitants, both of whom lived to be over 90 and were both living when the 1820 manual was printed. The church was then 40 years old.

Mr. Remele was pastor for eight years, and made but few converts. Not much knowledge of him remains

except that he was dismissed in anger, went to Vermont, near Middlebury, and took with him all the records of the church, **including the records of his own trial.** The church made repeated efforts but was never successful in reclaiming them.

The very year that the settlement of Newport was begun there was born to a family named Wines in Southold, L. I., a son who was named Abijah. The father came here fifteen years later, and when 20, Abijah married Ruth Giles, daughter of Benjamin. Benjamin appears to have died the following year. The Wines family settled at the upper end of the village on what is now the Aiken place on Belknap Ave. They had a big farm and plenty of money, so Abijah, feeling the call, determined to enter the ministry. He commenced his studies. Ruth carried on the farm. Abijah graduated from Dartmouth in 1794, probably the first Newport man to do so, and, the church being then without a minister, he was ordained in 1796. He seems to have set up a sort of school for ministers in his home, where he aided several young men in preparing for the ministry, furnishing them not only with the learning necessary to a minister of the day but with what was equally necessary, strong and courageous wives. Four of his daughters married ministers, two more married deacons, which in those days was next thing to being a minister. His eldest daughter, Nabby, married Silas Buell and lived and died at Orwell, Vt." Mr. Wines left the church in a highly prosperous condition.

Mr. Wines, who, by the way, was entitled to carry "D.D." after his name, probably never preached in the South Church. He may never have seen it. He was, however, probably instrumental in securing as his successor the son of the famous founder and president of Dartmouth College, Eleazor Wheelock. This man was James Wheelock, who was ordained here Dec. 2, 1818. "He was a man of scholarly tastes, ardent and energetic." A great revival soon commenced, and according to the record there were received into the church in the

single year 1819 more than a hundred converts. Then the record suddenly becomes one of transfers only.

It was under the pastoral care of Mr. Wheelock that this church building was begun and according to contemporary accounts it is to his superior taste and culture that we owe its exceptional architectural merit. David Lewis Yale, pastor here at the one hundredth anniversary of the building, made a thorough investigation of all matters connected with it and has left his findings in printed form. All the events so far narrated took place over on the west side of the river. That is where the town was established and where all shops and public buildings were placed. Then, in 1804, the Croydon turnpike was built and it came around the East flank of Croydon mountain, down through the Flat and straight down the valley and on to Goshen, Washington and Hillsboro. To have gone around by Newport Village would have involved too much of a detour, as well as the building of two very risky bridges. Quite slowly the village came over to join the turnpike. (A turnpike was a privately owned toll road) Daniel Dudley was the pioneer. He moved his grist mill over onto the East branch, or main river. Others followed in order to take advantage of the superior water power. There followed a period of about 25 years which I shall call the "cold war" during which there was a silent pulling, gouging and shoving to determine where the center of the new village was to be. The leaders of the two factions were Col. William Cheney and James Breck. Col. Cheney came to Newport from Alstead and established his store at the foot of Claremont Hill. In 1810 had abandoned "old main street" moved up onto the turnpike, where Richards Block now stands, and began to exert all his large influence in favor of that locality.

James Breck was born in Boston but lived at Croydon Flat several years before coming to Newport. It was in 1816 that he removed to Newport, establishing his store at the corner of Main and Elm Streets. He erected the building that still stands there and the once stately house just to the South. He exerted all his large

influence to make this the business center of the town. From here on I quote the careful paper of David Lewis Yale, pastor of the church when the one hundredth anniversary of the building was observed in 1923. Mr. Yale says:

> "Early in 1812 James Breck advised a new meeting house for the Congregationalists because the village was gradually moving away from the old meeting house at the foot of Claremont Hill, and naturally, he advocated a location at the south end. In the society records we find this entry under Jan. 29, 1821 'Voted that if there is a new meeting house built near Seth Richards, that it shall be the place of public worship.' (Capt. Seth Richards was at that time keeping the Rising Sun Tavern, where Charles Maxham now lives.) James Breck had won, and the new meeting house was to be South, and near his home,—and store.
>
> "William Cheney was not idle. At about this time he gave land for a Baptist Church at the North end and led in rushing the building to completion that year, dedicating it October 11. The Breck forces moved more slowly, and did not obtain the deeds for the land for their meeting house until Nov. 14. This interesting contest between the two factions did not end until 1826 when James Breck and James Forsaith joined in building the Eagle Hotel (now Eagle Apartments) north of the river. This was a surrender. The more vigorous initiative of William Cheney had won. But the few years when the issue was uncertain were stirring times. This short summary—explains why our meeting house stands apart from the center of the present town.
>
> "Tradition states that the plans were taken from the Acworth meeting house, which was erected a year or two before, but examination proves this idea to be wrong. The source of the plans was probably some book or books for builders, of which there were many at that time. John Leach was the

master builder. Who he was or where he came from I cannot find, but he could not have been the originator of the plans for the South Church. Many ideas in this building ante-date Christopher Wren, who died about 100 years before the times of which we are speaking. Some of the ideas about the steeple and the pilaster effect about the building are the creation of Wren's marvelous genius.

"It is probable that both the Acworth and Newport churches were built after designs from such books, modified by local builders and committees to meet local tastes and needs. The six dollars paid to John Leach for plans was probably for the adaptation of such book designs. The exterior architecture of this building speaks for itself. It is excellent in proportion.

THE STORY OF SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

In the first two years of Mr. Wheelock's pastorate about 100 were added to the church. In the next two years, only six. I have heard that he was, besides being scholarly, a man of much wit and humor. These were characteristics little understood by many in the parish, and their frustrations finally blazed out in accusations and charges, some of which were that the pastor and his family openly made fun of and sneered at members of the church. An ecclesiastical council was called on Feb. 21, 1823. It met at the house of Mr. Wheelock, which seems to be the one directly across the street from the church, now owned by Bertie Davis. The council consisted of five ministers, all from out of town. They declared most of the charges frivolous, others trival, and some (there were eleven in all) not pertinent, but after gently chiding the proponents, wisely concluded that the minister's usefulness was at an end here, praised him liberally and recommended his dismissal. An innocent looking document which purports to be a copy of Mr. Wheelock's farewell sermon turns out to be a record of the charges and findings of the council, doubtless published at the instigation of the Wheelock party. In

his sermon the departing minister took some good round house swings at such part of the congregation as had opposed him. It was dangerous business in those days to quarrel with the minister, who always had the last word in the argument. Mr. Wheelock expresses grave concern for the spiritual welfare of a large part of the congregation, implying that they were far from being in a state of grace, and recommending that reforms be undertaken while there yet was time—remembering that dread day when we all must stand in the judgment, and woe to him who has an obvious blemish upon his soul.

It must be with a feeling of deep regret that we learn that Mr. Wheelock, who had watched over every step of the creation of the church, departed three weeks before its dedication. Col. William Cheney went on to his greatest triumph, the setting up of the County of Sullivan, seeing Newport become the county seat, with court house, scales of justice atop thereof, and all. A great day for William Cheney if, indeed, he could be present when the county building was dedicated, and we hope he was present, but his grandson, Major William Cheney Manning of Portland, Me., in a paper prepared for Wheeler's History, and only partly used, says that he died in 1830 of consumption, caused by exposure in preparing the court house for use.

There is one sentence in the 1826 manual, which neither Mr. Yale nor any one else has undertaken to explain. It says "There was a bell in the tower from the first, BUT TWO OTHERS HAVE SINCE TAKEN ITS PLACE." It is a certainty that the unknown writer of this was mistaken, the stock book of Revere and son, according to an invaluable publication by Eva Speare, of Plymouth, 1944 contains entries showing that the Baptist bell Revere, No. 265, was bought in July, 1822 and the Congregational bell, No. 275, billed to James Breck and weighing 1,212 pounds, three months later. Neither bell has ever been recast. There is no record that either of the Newport churches was one of the sev-

eral from which the Reveres had great difficulty in getting their pay.

The Council which recommended the dismissal of Mr. Wheelock also decided that a day of fasting and prayer would doubtless be of inestimable benefit of Newport spirits, so sadly ravaged. The day was held accordingly, and seems far from having been in vain. For the Rev. John Woods of Warner, a graduate of Williams College, felt its power, came to Newport, took over the church, bought a house, and, success having been assured, became a member—number 470, five years later.

Mr. Wood's pastorate opened with about 250 members. When he was released, in 1851, his last accession was numbered 800—and it appears that the number he added amounted to about 350. It must be understood, however, that these were boom years in Newport. The fact that Newport was becoming the shire town of the new county of Sullivan induced many people to settle here. This fact is the more vivid to the writer, since his own great-grandfather was one, a lawyer, coming here, as near as we know, in 1822.

At the time of his induction he was neither young nor old. He was 38. His wife, Achsah, joined the same day, May, 1826. She was the second of three wives—a very usual record in days when people had usually to travel in double harness or perish. The church manual speaks of him as "a learned scholar and clear thinker—thoughtful and solemn. "Mr. Woods seems to have been indicated by the little girl who, seeing some one coming toward the house, called out "Mama, someone is coming and I guess it is God."

From an historical standpoint, the outstanding event of Mr. Woods' pastorate was the great historical celebration held on July 4th, 1846—the 80th birthday of the town. In this, South Church was the leader and the scene of the chief gatherings, which were very largely attended, but the chief address was by a Baptist, the Rev. Baron Stow of Boston, native of Newport, and at the moment one of the country's best known Baptist

divines. Mr. Stow was never a pastor here, but was a graduate of old Newport Academy, precourser of our high school, in about 1819. Besides his address, a large number of papers by local citizens were read, which preserved much history which otherwise might have been lost.

The really significant feature of this celebration was the presence of no less a person than Sarah Josepha Hale—the great and beloved editor of Godey's Ladies Book, Philadelphia. Soon after the death of her husband in 1822 she was obliged to leave Newport and went to Boston to pursue a literary career. To the mind of this writer she became the greatest woman in America, and still holds that distinction. I believe 1846 to be the first time she had revisited the town. Possibly it was also the last. For the reunion she contributed a hymn, "Gathering Song" which was "lined out" and sung to the tune of Old Hundred.

How blest to find a resting place
A gathering goal in life's swift race,
Where hands that Time untwined
Once more in friendly clasp are joined.

Tho parted from our place of birth
Yet still, like flower seeds left in earth,
Its deep remembrances remain
And, waked to life, unfold again.

And thus, with hearts abloom we come,
From many a dear and distant home,
Like pilgrims to their own roof-tree,
To keep this way of jubilee.

And tho a shade of sadness fall,
That come who may, they come not all,
Yet Love shall here his torch renew,
And Hope, renewed, look upward, too.

And while with grateful hearts we say
The God of old is ours today,
The same who led our fathers on
'Till Freedom's heritage was won.

Still onward leads, while blessings flow
As Heaven has turned its tide below,
Oh, may each voice a spirit free
Bless God for this sweet jubilee.

ROMAN CATHOLIC

The great potato famine of 1848-49 in Ireland did not immediately affect Newport. Shiploads of immigrants came over the Atlantic but in spreading out did not reach this far inland for some time. Ultimately, they did. The oldest Catholic Church in the state is located at West Claremont, and back in the 1850's it began to be noticed that on Sunday foot passengers were more numerous on the Claremont road than at any other time. As afterward disclosed, Newport Catholics were making a practice of walking the 12 miles to Mass at Claremont and then walking back.

This could not go on very long, of course, and sometime in the late 1850's a mission was established here under the care of Father O'Sullivan of the Claremont church. When the Masons abandoned their old quarters in the Matson-Burke-Dudley-Saggiotes block on lower Main Street, the Catholic order promptly moved in and continued in this building for nearly 10 years, in the status of a mission. The Catholic Church (St. Patrick's) was established in 1875. Land was given by Dexter Richards — a Congregational deacon, by the way — at a very sightly spot on what was then Chase Street, corner of Summer, and a handsome church was erected. The parish grew and in the 1900's a committee headed by Governor Murphy greatly enlarged the church. The building had been originally a rather high and narrow structure and the changes greatly improved its proportions. Some years before a parochial residence had been added to the plant. "Assumption Hall" across School Street has been added to take care of the social activities of the parish, and now the plant is complete and satisfactory, and serves the largest congregation in town.

An early supporter and liberal contributor to the church was Patrick Herrick. He was Dexter Richards'

right-hand man for many years, but probably never had any exactly defined office, having been what would now be called "an executive." He died and was buried in a family tomb on the grounds of the church.

After Father O'Sullivan, three priests stand out in the affections of the parishioners: Fr. Finnigan, Fr. Sweeney, and Fr. Shields, the present (1961) incumbent. Several times there has been a movement toward a parochial school but so far none has been established. There has always been, however, need for a social hall with accompanying facilities, and in 1952 the church had a chance to buy a near-by property with a large barn, and this has now been remodeled into a hall which is called "Assumption Hall," and serves the church very well. The pastor is now obliged to have an assistant.

CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY

The Episcopalians have had a church organization ever since the beginning of the century, but although a church building was provided in 1908, Newport was in the status of a mission until 1928. The church building itself was made possible by the gifts of Mrs. George H. Edgell, daughter of Austin Corbin. The design, quite reminiscent of an old English parish church, was the work of Col. Sam. DeWolfe Lewis of Newport, who was really a banker rather than an architect, but who greatly preferred the latter occupation. He has several other buildings to his credit, all showing considerable genius.

The first half century of Episcopalian effort showed slow development, even though the members displayed notable devotion and energy, but with the advent of resident clergymen again, the church began to spring into full being. Like St. Patrick's, it was handicapped by the lack of proper facilities for church school and other parish activities, until it was proposed to develop the space under the church. This was undertaken with great enthusiasm partly by the members themselves, and with professional assistance the work was finished and called "The Undercroft." Mission status is now in the past, and the church is enjoying a full and active life in the community.

This church was established in a singuarly beautiful location on the old Albert S. Wait property at the corner of Park and Grove Streets. The old Wait house, next to the Baptist Church, was once used as a parsonage by the Episcopalians, but for reasons of financial stringency they were obliged to sell it, retaining only enough land on Cedar Street for the church itself. Later, however, they were fortunate enough to have it returned to them, and it is now repaired, rejuvenated and again used as a parsonage.

GREEK ORTHODOX

Newportonians who now thought their church building complete for a while at least were pleasantly surprised when, about 1950, the Greek people, who had been growing in numbers, wealth and influence all through the first half of the century, blossomed out with a new church property. They procured land on Winter Street and proceeded to build in a style somewhat different from any before seen here. This church, heeding the new conditions created by the rapid increase of motor transportation, chose a big wide-open lot, which gave room not only for a handsome church structure, but left space for 200 or more automobiles. This church also was built high enough to leave basement space for a well-equipped hall, thus achieving what the older denominations had each been a long time in developing. This church is a branch of the Greek Orthodox faith, which looks to Constantinople for leadership. In order to get at the roots of this we have to go back to the Emperor Constantine who established the Eastern church.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

Church development during our second 100 years may be said, barring a somewhat brief interlude of liberalism under the Unitarian and Universalist banners, to have been characterized by a gradual swing away from the strict doctrines of the Baptist and Congregational dogma and into less and less strictly denominational channels.

Now, however, roughly in the second quarter of the second century, we behold a reversal of the trend, and the coming of the Adventist and Christian and Missionary Alliance movements, which may be roughly called Fundamentalist. North Newport, which has traditionally showed the way in church movement, again took the lead, and in 1950 or there-abouts these people built a church and opened a parochial school at the north end of town. They also have a pastor, who follows the pattern of the older "elders" and combines the duties of church leader with civilian occupations. The school, recognized under the regular school system, is, I believe, closed at the moment. However, if the movement is as virile as it seems to be, the school may be progressing again before this comes to your eyes.

OUR CHURCHES

The original church in Newport was the Baptist. That is, it was the first to be organized. This took place on "Baptist Hill" which is to say, in the neighborhood of North Newport, and it stayed there until the conversion of Col. Cheney, who no sooner joined anything but he took over its management. So it was not long before Col. Cheney presented the land necessary to the church at the same time he gave us the Common. This accounts for the magnificent location at the head of Newport Common.

As first laid out the church faced Main Street. It was rebuilt and turned around in 1872, giving us its present appearance. Nobody seems to be able to classify this structure, (it seems to conform to no particular style), but architectually it is a success.

Prominent in the view here presented is the Methodist church. Methodism offically did not arrive here until the 1850's, when a split in the South Church, occasioned the bringing to light a Methodist movement which had been in existence a number fo years, under "Father" Wakefield, well known citizen of North Newport.

This movement came into life, and a vigorous church sprang into existence. It happened that a ready-made site, and a most desirable one, awaited this church for the old and celebrated "Tontine," a building as long as our Richards Block, had just been torn down, creating a natural site for the Methodists — who seem to have been prompt in seizing it. The Post Office now covers a part of this land.

Both these churches have enjoyed magnificent rebuilding operations and both have installed illuminated memorial windows, and the gift of the finest in church organs. Prominent in Methodist giving has been the Fairbanks family, with three generations of active giving.

John Fairbanks is the present representative of the family and he now holds a seat in the town's governing body — the Selectmen, also is a recent town moderator.

The Baptist movement has owed less to individual generosity, and more to congregational action. There was the gift of Deacon Charles M. Emerson. Deacon Emerson's wife, Jeal, was a leading member of the Fletcher family Missionary Society, long active hereabout. He it was also who built the handsome house now occupied as a Moose Club House. It was a grandson of his, also for whom was set up the Kendall Room at the Newport Veterans' Club. Lt. Col. Kendall, a West Pointer, was killed in action in Italy. The Baptist bell is one of our two Revere-cast bells in town. It was bought in 1823 and never has been re-cast.

The Baptist minister Rev. William F. Brown, is at present the informal "dean" of the Protestant clergy in town, having been minister much much longer than any of his co-workers. He is also beloved on account of quality of mind and heart.

The early records of the church were long ago destroyed in a household fire; so it is now impossible to produce very much of them.

All the older churches rejoiced in elaborate horse-sheds — in order that the church-goers of other years might put away their rigs on rainy Sundays. The extent of these horse-sheds was truly remarkable. Joseph Parmelee's poem "Muster Day" indicates some of the unofficial uses to which these structures might be put. It seems that when one of the Grantham riflemen partook too liberally of the contents of his canteen, his comrades laid him away in the Baptist refuge and then went home without him. It was moonlight when he awoke, and a moon-eyed calf nearly scared the life out of him. Viva horse-sheds. All these churches have been well supported and have contributed much to the culture of the town as well as to the scenic attractiveness of the village.

THE MILLERITES

I would like to bring this pretty long and serious chapter to a close by relating an incident which in some aspects borders on the comic. Only, of course, well-bred people like you and I do not regard as funny any belief, however grotesque, which is sincerely held by anybody. So this curious manifestation, which seems to have had numerous followers here, as elsewhere, must be respected even though all its disciples have long ago been gathered to whatever reward is reserved for the simple of mind and heart.

In the fall of 1842 and winter of 1843 a prophet named William Miller arose in Massachusetts, who prophesied the end of the world, which was to occur on a certain date — April 4 to be exact. As usual, North Newport was the center of local excitement, but it also appears that the "old red store" at the corner of Maple and Main, no — not where the telephone office now stands (that was the residence of Editor Harvey of the Argus) but the other east side corner. This was the old Wilcox store, where stood the whipping post.

Rooms were fitted up in a part of the building and fervid meetings were held. Wheeler says "It is difficult for one not an eye-witness to conceive of the wild

frenzy which prevailed as approached the day when they were to see the world envelcped in flames which should burn it up and all the wicked, while they, themselves, were to be caught up into the clouds unscathed."

The impassioned eloquence of their leaders, the thrilling strains of music, in which all joined, contributed to the intensity of feelings of the hour. Of course, when "the Day" came, nothing happened, and the "saints" returned to their homes, families and occupations, if, indeed, any still remained to them.

Newport's biggest celebration and did we decorate! The Centennial Celebration of 1911.

CHAPTER X

STORM

1821 — 1842 — 1938

OTHER BAD MOMENTS HERE AND NEARBY

In the first 40 years of our history we possess no record of any exceptional storm or flood or other catastrophy of more than passing note. But in 1821, occurred an event which has been rumbling down the halls of time ever since. It was a sure-enough cyclone, with all the attendant well recognized phenomena — cone-shaped funnel, now broad, now small; heavy rocks lifted out of their beds, straws driven into hardwood trees and more important, an infant lifted out of its bed and dropped into Sunapee's Job's Creek, a quarter mile away.

Half way between Sunapee village and Georges Mills, a side road leads up to what is now known as Brown's Hill — said to afford the finest possible view of the whole lake. On this hill, back in the 1820's lived a man named John Harvey Huntoon. It was in this family that the cyclone — for such it assuredly was — produced its only fatality in this area, although several deaths were reported over in Kearsarge Gorge, Warner and Sutton. It appears that Newport itself didn't feel this storm very acutely — at least we have no account of it in our town histories. But a manuscript furnished by Mrs. Pearl M. Perkins, long-time Argus correspondent at Sunapee, gives a detailed account, a part of which follows:

"On the afternoon of Sunday, Sept. 9, 1821, occurred the famous tornado in Central New Hampshire. The day before had been very warm and sultry, although the sun shone brightly. The wind blew from the southwest until about six o'clock, when a very black cloud was seen to rise in the northwest and as it passed to the southwest, the lightning was incessant. About 6:30 the wind suddenly changed to north, and a peculiar looking brassy cloud was seen in the northwest. As it came nearer it was noted that a cylinder or inverted cone of vapor seemed to be suspended from it. It did not seem

to have any very destructive force until reaching Cornish and Croydon. It passed from Croydon to Sunapee, then into New London and Sutton, over Kearsarge mountain into Warner, finally ending its course in the edge of Boscawen. It is said to have commenced near Lake Champlain.

"One observer, a woman in Warner, stated that its appearance was like a trumpet, the small end downward; also like a great elephant's trunk, let down out of heaven and moving slowly along. When it reached the easterly part of the town, the lower part seemed to be taken up from the ground and bending around in a serpentine form, until it passed behind a black cloud and disappeared. This view was from a distance of three miles. It was attended with but little rain in parts of its course — more in others.

"It lowered the water in a pond in Warner three feet. The width of its track was from six rods to half a mile, changing with the height of the cloud, which rose and fell. Its force was the greatest when it was most compact. In Croydon, besides other damage, the house of Deacon Cooper was shattered, his barn and other buildings swept away."

(Resuming the Sunapee narrative) the account says "No other buildings were directly in its narrow path until it reached Sunapee Lake. Here it came in contact with the buildings of John Harvey Huntoon. The house contained eight persons. The tornado, after a brief warning, was upon them, and the house and two barns were instantly thrown to the ground. One side of the house fell upon Mr. Huntoon and his wife, who were standing in the kitchen. The next moment it (the house) was blown away and dashed to pieces. Mrs. Huntoon was carried at least 10 rods. A child of 11 months was sleeping on a bed in one room. The dress it wore was afterward found in the lake 150 rods away, but the child could not be found. The following Wednesday its mangled body was picked up on the shore of the lake where it had been carried by the waves. The bed-stead was found 80 rods from the house and northerly of the

hurricane's track. The other seven persons were injured, but none fatally."

From Wendell or Sunapee, the cyclone crossed the lake to the New London shore, and it is said that down back of the Deacon Davis place, (Route 103B), its track can still be traced if one knows where to look. Much damage was done in New London, but it was only after the storm had ripped its way over Kearsarge Mountain, seemingly much enraged by the obstruction, and slid down the mountain's easterly slope, that it vented its full fury destroying a dozen sets of buildings and killing half a dozen people. Part of the story relates to a dozen half-grown turkeys which were roosting on a fence. The cyclone whirled them all up into the air, and it was said at the time that no trace not even a feather of them ever was found.

TORNADO OF JULY, 1848

The following account is taken from The Argus & Spectator of Aug. 4, 1848. Remembering that it would require a pretty frightful storm at that period to pry a notice out of our local editors, who were too much saturated with politics to take notice of such happenings, it appears that Old Boreas must have been pretty rough to rate this unusual outburst. The storm was, of course, in late July, this paper having been that printed or dated, Aug. 4. The Argus said:

"The tornado, which passed over this region on Thursday, seems to have left its card at various points. Fences were razed to the ground, trees blown over, corn fields were torn to pieces, barns unroofed, chimneys thrown down, windows broken, etc. In this village it seemed disposed to respect private property more than usual in similar cases, and gave no attention to anything short of **public** buildings. Accordingly, it hurled bricks from the chimney of the jail, walked into the Universalist chapel (Johnson's store) through a window, entered the County Safe (Municipal Building) in like manner, and finished the exploit by carrying away the scales from the cupola of the Court House — thus sparing the

throne of Justice while demolishing its emblem. We perceive the wooden cannon atop the gun house† has been dismounted, and Boreas took it along with him. — With the emblems of war and justice in each hand he doubtless pursued his journey with 'impunity and great boldness.' "

This event was doubtless no "tornado," but just a big wind, as these terms were loosely applied to storms of the period. The Sunapee blow, however, seems to have been a real tornado — the first and last ever reported in this state. In a separate story, headed with the caption "Distressing Casualty," we learn that this storm was much more serious in the neighboring town of Cornish. It may have been somewhat modified in getting over Cornish mountain — provided it came from that direction. Let us quote again —

"We learn that the house of Mr. Andrew Dodge (of that town) was blown down during the gale of Thursday, and four persons, Mrs. Andrew Dodge Jr. and three of her children, were crushed to death beneath the ruins. There were nine persons in the house at the time, those who escaped with their lives being more or less injured, some of whom, it is feared, will not recover. But one of their number, a lad of 14, was able to extricate himself without assistance, and it is probably owing to this fortunate circumstance that the others obtained relief. He lost no time in procuring assistance from neighbors a half-mile distant, who removed old Mr. and Mrs. Dodge and two living children, the youngest of whom was found clasped in the arms of its dead mother."

From here it will be necessary to pass over several interesting manifestations of nature and tell about the well-remembered hurricane of Sept. 4, 1938.

THE 1938 HURRICANE

Quite unlike the tornado of 1821, which after all was kind of a local affair, the big wind of 1938 was part

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†Note: There was at this time a "gun house" about where Towle High School now stands. There may have been another on Court House Common.

of what has been described as the "greatest single disaster (property-wise anyway) in American history." The huge loss was due, not only to the severity of the storm, involving the combined effects of flood, waves and wind, but the wide area to which they were applied — practically all New England, the richest and most thickly settled portion of the nation. Here in Newport and vicinity, we suffered no loss of life, but in every other particular we went right along with the rest of the region.

The hurricane was preceded by four days of the heaviest rain anybody could remember. This softened the ground so deeply that trees, deprived of the support of their roots, fell an easy victim to the raging winds which soon came upon them. The season was just at the opening of schools and colleges, when the summer people were reluctantly closing their estates, getting their young folks back to school, and in general readying themselves for the fall and winter season. So the houses were caught mostly empty but only half prepared for the winter season.

Trouble developed in the late afternoon of Wednesday, Sept. 21, when trees began to go down, and by midnight the monster was upon us in full force. The storm came in from the southeast, which maybe was the best quarter for Newport, as it gave us some protection from Sunapee mountain and other high lands in that direction. The net result was that over across our valley, on the Pine St. side, destruction was exceptionally heavy. A young pine grove just back of the Fairbanks' place was flattened, and extensive damage continued for a mile or more toward the north. The direction of the storm was of especial importance over on Lake Sunapee, for places such as The Boulders, North of the harbor, were exposed to the full blast of the storm, with terrific results. Surprising thing about this blow was that trees could be stripped away so generally with little or no damage to houses, even of camparatively light construction.

It was a wild night here in Newport. "Call to quarters" summoned our firemen, military units and semi-

military units, which all stood ready to answer any alarm, and all through the night went out details to rescue persons caught in various kinds of trouble, and secure property. About midnight the metal roof of the Eagle Apartments, somewhat weakened by age, blew off, and the American Legion disaster unit was summoned and quickly spread tarpaulins over the threatened areas, and otherwise acted to save property. One thing they could do nothing about—three big chimneys on the building blew over, two of them into Main and Central Sts., and the third and biggest one onto an annex. But nobody was hurt.

Of course, telephone and electric service was crippled over a wide area so that emergency crews were engaged for weeks in disentangling wires and setting new poles. Television antennas had not yet made their appearance, otherwise they would have added to the huge job of replacement. William Graves of Sunapee, however, an early amateur wireless operator, was able to contact distant places and inform anxious persons of the safety of relatives known to be in our area, and as to the needs of their property. The big estates on the east shore were pretty much all a shambles — a tangle of great trees lying prone and a bar to egress or ingress.

This condition was immediately recognized as an additional fire hazard and Gov. Murphy immediately issued a warning proclamation. No fires resulted, however, and it was soon recognized that the great number of green trees which toppled over were the answer to this. However, it was also recognized that in time a bad fire hazard would result.

One of the bad spots was on the Hay-Whitney estate in Newbury, where more than a million feet of lumber was salvaged. It must be realized that when this disaster came about, the Great Depression, which had got under way in the early thirties, was still on, and artificial employment was everywhere being resorted to. I was, a little later, going to Concord one day and picked up a laborer from the Hay estate. "Ain't it a shame," said he, "that something like this has to happen before anybody will give us a job."

The days after the hurricane saw a good many meetings, and much conference as to what had to be done. The results were not happy. For the end result was that each owner tackled his problem in his own way, usually with the assistance of quite impecunious workers from Vermont. Throughout the affected area some five billion feet of lumber was salvaged and turned over to a government agency set up for the purpose. Twenty-six storage places — including a number of ponds — were set up in Sullivan County, and although the government arrangements were not fully satisfactory to everybody, they did form a method whereby the wreck could be transformed into much-needed cash.

So here we were with about five years' normal cut of sawed timber on hand, and no regular outlet for it. The second World War solved the problem. Like the hurricane itself, the answer came to me from a person of low degree, traveling on the Claremont train one day. "We didn't know what this was all about did we?" He then explained that without this immense supply of by-then dry lumber it would have been next to impossible for us to have carried on the (W.W. II) war successfully, what with the great demand for lumber for everything from barracks to ammunition boxes. "We didn't have no idea what t'was all about, but" continued he with a knowing wink, and with one finger pointing aloft, "there was One Feller who knew all about it." I had to agree that he was right.

Well, of course, the highways and railroads were a mess, but we had enormous help from a company of 95 CCC men, encamped in Goshen. Mostly city boys, they had been organized and trained as forest workers, and eventually became good soldiers. The flood waters had turned that long railroad bridge at Contoocook right over on its side, and totally demolished another one further down. Crews were employed for weeks in fixing up minor washouts, but these were not the important effects — the damage to our forests was the big loss, locally, and for more than a year crews were at work salvaging the trees. A lot of it couldn't be done.

CHAPTER XI

THE CORBIN STORY
ORIGIN OF THE GREAT PARK — THE CORBIN FAMILY — FATAL ACCIDENT

No Newport name is more familiar than that of "Corbin." We have the Corbin bridge and the Corbin place, and more important than these we have the Corbin Park or Game Preserve, and lastly the Corbin Airport.

Yet more properly speaking, none of these familar names really belongs to the prominent features it represents. The Corbin Bridge and the Corbin Place might well be called the Edgell Bridge and "Rush Touton Place" and Corbin Park is officially the "Blue Mountain Forest Game Preserve." The Corbin Airport is officially "Parlin Airport."

The Corbin name nevertheless persists, because the name "Austin Corbin" has to do with their origins and because he himself, a native of Newport, was the town's most picturesque and powerful native.

In the history of Newport the Corbin name first appears in connection with Dr. James Corbin, who arrived (1791) on horseback, his wife and child on a pillion behind. Dr. Corbin appears to have been a man of considerable means and no less a good farmer than a "good" doctor. He proceeded to settle down here in the wilderness that Newport then was — not only settled here but remained to become, not Newport's first M. D. but the first to remain here permanently.

Dr. Corbin adopted a strenuous career, he had a wide practice, there being no other M. D. for miles around. His frequent calls were made on horseback, there being little but crude trails throughout the wilderness. He was a member of our old Corinthian Lodge of Masons. He died in line of duty Jan. 16, 1826 being then but 64 years of age. The house he built is still standing on the North Newport Road "Over The Hill" being now known as the "Minnie Davis Farm."

Dr. Corbin brought with him from Somers, Conn., an infant son, named Austin, who had two brothers named James and Charles, both natives, who became prominent men; Austin was one of the three men who moved The Argus (early newspaper) to Newport. He was noted for his politeness and generous hospitality. James was a doctor, lived in Canada. Charles became a Colonel of the 31st Regiment.

Austin's brothers, Daniel C. and James, were among the most prominent railroad builders in all the west. Austin also became the father of the Hon. Austin Corbin, who we shall refer to, as "The Austin Corbin," his prominence in life removing him far above his illustrious uncles. He was born in Newport Aug. 16, 1827. He married Hannah M., daughter of Simeon and Hannah Wheeler, who was a granddaughter of the notable Rev. Jacob Haven of Croydon. Austin was bred in the law but being of a restless nature, he soon moved west and established himself at Davenport, Iowa, where he remained for several years.

In spite of being president of a Davenport bank; (he got the first Federal bank charter to be issued in the United States) he found Iowa life slow, and when he had accumulated several million dollars, he moved to New York City, where he became one of the great tycoons of his period. But he never lost interest in his native town, and in the early 1890's he conceived the idea of establishing, on and near Croydon Mountain a great game preserve, the chief object of which was to save the remnants of the American Bison or buffalo, then rapidly becoming extinct. He also introduced many varities of game, including a few moose and some elk as well as a sonder of wild pigs from the Black Forest of Germany.

The whole tract comprised a matter of 28,000 acres, the whole enclosed by a wire fence eight feet above the ground and, in deference to the digging ability of the long snouted porkers, three feet additional, under ground.

Arriving in the fast growing wilderness of New York City, Mr. Corbin proceeded to undertake projects familiar to the natives but seemingly impossible of accomplishment. Chief of these was the purchase and total re-arrangement of a big collection of shacks on the western tip of Long Island, known since revolutionary times as "Coney Island." After endless difficulties and interminable labor, Mr. Corbin found himself in possession of the whole tract. He demolished and reconstructed until the place was unrecognizable. But he also found himself in possession of the finest beach in the best location on the very front doorstep of America's largest city.

He completed his work by building to it a railroad (known later as the Long Island railroad) thus started the most famous summer resort in North America — "Coney Island" — theme of song and story interminable, incredible though it may seem — the brain child of this man from Newport, N. H. — Austin Corbin.

This accomplished, Corbin returned to his favorite New Hampshire project, "The Corbin Game Preserve," 20 miles long, it included parts of five townships and the summits of three big mountains — Stowell Hill, Grantham Mountain and most important of all, three thousand foot Croydon Peak, which looks down upon and dominates the entire Sugar River Valley, and forms its chief scenic feature. The country folk were not impressed. They called it "Corbin's deer park." They said Mr. Corbin was destroying valuable farms to little purpose. Had he proposed filling the whole area with wild tomahawk Indians, he could not have been less popular.

His purchases included 63 complete farms and total land transfers numbering about 265. In the hard times which were soon to follow, this was referred to as Corbin's folly and the tract was called by the New York papers a big worthless chunk of New Hampshire wilderness populated by wild animals and thickly scattered with granite boulders.

Mr. Corbin, however, lived long enough to see the complete success of his plans. His buffalo thrived and

multiplied, their descendants now populate every big city zoo in America (New Hampshire has even exported buffalo to, of all places, Oklahoma.) Only the wild pigs failed to observe the parks limits and when a big wind destroyed a western section of the fence, many of them escaped and we still hear of them as ranging some of our western New Hampshire towns.

The Elk, too, got out and started ravaging the countryside, so that 20 or 25 years ago New Hampshire had to declare a one-day hunting season for elk which resulted in some wild times, still vividly remembered by sportsmen. Only the lordly moose found the preserve too small for their spreading antlers and too lacking in the peculiar kind of moss that they require and they failed to propogate and died out.

The story goes that, once upon a time, Edward, Prince of Wales, came to hunt in the park with one of the Edgell boys and having received permission to shoot a buffalo proceeded to shoot, not one but five.

DEATH OF AUSTIN CORBIN

Included in the park in a small area which lies in Newport is a small pond called Governor's Pond. One beautiful morning in July, 1896, Mr. Corbin, then staying a few days at his birthplace the famous Corbin House on the North Newport road, decided to go to Governor's Pond on a fishing trip. Unfortunately he had just bought, through the Glynn stables in Newport, a new and spirited pair of horses. The carriage was an open brougham. The horses had new harnesses with open bridles — to which they were unused. Just outside the portchiere Mr. Corbin, according to local reports, occupying the rear seat, raised an umbrella, and this so frightened the horses that Stokes, the coachman, (a rather slight Englishman), lost control and they dashed wildly down the slope toward the main road, and in turning, they couldn't make the curve and the whole party was thrown upon the adjoining rocks.

Mr. Corbin at this time was nearly 70 years of age. He was a heavy man, rather short, with a barrel chest

and short neck. The violence of his fall broke a number of bones. The coachman died in a few hours, but Austin lived until toward evening — long enough to allow the Boston surgeon, Dr. Cooley, to report that "nothing could be done." Never have I forgotten the train. It made a record run from Boston — and it must have been a wild ride. I remember it standing at Belknap Ave. crossing, air pumps beating a wild tattoo. I suppose it had simply drifted down from North Newport, where the Corbins had a private station, to gain a siding. But maybe for some unknown reason, it stopped here, and allowed the Doctor to proceed by carriage to the estate.

The Corbin house was one of the few here provided with telephone service. That saved a lot of time. Dr. Cain is said to have been on the scene within minutes after the accident, with Dr. Stickney not far behind. Grandson Corbin Edgell sustained a broken wrist and Dr. Kunzer, German tutor, was also injured. The dead and injured were all loaded into the Corbin private car. Mrs. Stokes also joined the funeral party and so, man and master, they rolled into New York.

Bishop Williams of the Episcopal diocese of New York conducted the funeral service. There was a notable group of bearers; General Tracy, Cornelius Vanderbuilt, Senator Chandler, C. M. Platt, Sir Roderick Cameron, J. Rogers Maxwell, Dumont Clark, A. N. Parlin, and W. B. Kendall — all leaders of finance.

The descendants of Mr. and Mrs. Corbin were notable people. Mary, the eldest daughter, after traveling and studying in France, married Count Champollion, grandson of the famous Frenchman who unravelled the Rosetta Stone inscriptions and so unlocked many of the secrets of Egyptian history — for which service he was made a Count of the Empire. It is a grandson, Andre Champollion, who is interesting to us. He was born in France, and, upon the outbreak of the war, in 1914 as a French citizen felt obliged to offer his services to help save France from the Hun. He may have thought that as an expert linguist he would be assigned in a non-combatant capacity such as translator. But it

turned out that he was required to serve as a "poileau" and being taller than the average Frenchman, the trenches gave him little shelter, and he soon fell victim to a German rifleman. Newport — still, 50 years later, maintains a French flag at the Legion tree on the Common, in honor of this 1915 casualty. One of Andre Champollion's paintings, a landscape, is still to be seen in the Newport library.

But the Corbin bad luck had not yet run out. Another grandson, Harold Edgell, curator of the Metropolitan Museum in Boston died untimely, after the death of his wife by a fall from a horse. A son of theirs, graduate of West Point, was killed in an automobile crash in Virginia. The great Corbin park was incorporated as a private hunting club, and still carries on, although with its limited membership and dislike of publicity, it is of small interest to Newport.

At the time, Newport figured that the death of Mr. Corbin was a real public catastrophy, because he had formed plans in which we figured, and which because of his death, could never be carried out.

CHAPTER XII

OUR BENEFACTORS

How Newport Has Received a Million Dollars in Gifts

This will be a chapter devoted to the tale of how our town has in the last 75 years received gifts of over a million dollars; it is undertaken in the full consciousness that probably of the thousands, at one time or another, who have lived here, few failed — even though it be only contributing a pie to a "Grand Army Supper" —failed to be a community benefactor; so this becomes a matter of degree. Those who have the means to give have given, and it behooves the rest of us to accord them due credit, and so here goes —

When compiling our list of givers, we will have to begin with the family whose name has become most often associated with gifts of considerable magnitude. So we have to start with the Richards family, and it becomes necessary to give a little of their background:

About 1800 Sylvanus Richards came from Dedham, Mass. His ancestor is said to have been one of the original proprietors of that ancient town. Here in Newport, he soon established the family habit of having plenty of money, for he located out on the Claremont Road on the "Dimmick Cutting" or "Judson Brooks" farm; started a wayside inn, and proceeded to raise a large family.

Some years later, he moved into town and bought of the Buells, the "Rising Sun Tavern." His brother, Leonard, was one of the men who, in turnpike days, drove one of the six-or eight-horse wagons to deliver Newport products at Boston.

Sylvanus not only carried on his farm of 400 acres, but kept a tavern, was frequently a town officer and raised a large family. Several accounts of the family state these facts, but omit telling us what finally happened to him, or, like Moses of old, where his last resting place may be found.

Of his son, Seth (Capt. Seth) we know a great deal more. In the years we are discussing, Newport Village was gradually taking form. In 1811 Capt. Gordon Buell, Sarah J. (Buell) Hale's father, came down off East Mountain and built a hotel which he called the "Rising Sun" Tavern (still standing a little north of the Congregational Church.)

Martha Whittlesey Buell, Sarah's mother, died that year, but whether her death was a cause of Captain Gordon's selling the hotel, we may only conjecture. Seth Richards bought it but did not remain long there. He took a place near William Cheney's Common, and became, after that fine leader's death in 1830, his successor in the Cheney store, and in forwarding many of the plans that Col. Cheney started, but had lacked the time to finish.

Among other activities, he became a militia officer and was universally known as "Capt. Seth," but which of Newport's two companies he headed I do not know.

In 1840, a man named Perley C. Coffin, in company with one John Puffer, started a woolen mill on the river east of Newport, which was named "The Sugar River Mills." Its chief product, blue mixed flannel (trade name DRP) became standard throughout the country.

The Richardses enlarged the plant from time to time and made progressive improvements until it became Newport's chief industry, and so remained for three quarters of a century.

It has taken a long time to reach Dexter Richards and the story of the Richards Free Library, and the later and greater gift of the Richards School. A lot of matters have to be explained before we can show these gifts in their proper setting.

It was in 1888 that Dexter Richards, son of Capt. Seth, determined to give Newport a much needed Library Building. You must realize the time element to appreciate the real significance of the gift; it happened long before the Federal Income Tax created a new mo-

tive for community giving, and long before the words, "Carnegie" and "Library" became connected in the public mind.

There seems to have been no motive for this act, save a desire to see a handsome building performing daily in the direction of better community knowledge and understanding.

Of course, the building itself reflects the mood of its time. If it is high posted and difficult to heat— so was everything built in its period; fuel was not a serious factor back in the 1890's. People in general did not have steam heat and did not expect to be warm anyway. The dedication was a grand event, with part of the exercises held in the Town Hall, and of course included a general inspection of the building by the public.

As a climax of Mr. Richards' long and notable career, came the long remembered "Golden Party" which was participated in, in one way or another, by practically every member of the community. The "Golden Book," housed in a golden cabinet and containing the names of almost everybody in town, was circulated and at a magnificent reception, held in the spacious Richards "Mansion" on the Common, was presented to them.

I regret to report that not all of the country folks who were invited to partake of the fancy food provided by an imported caterer enjoyed it, but the party was voted a great success nevertheless, and the cabinet with its golden signatures is still preserved in the archives of the family.

This school was to have several novelties — firstly, it was to be steam-heated. (Stoves had held sway up to this time.) It was to have physics and chemistry laboratories. The finish was to be in cyprus. Toilets (flush) in the basements. It occupies a big lot near St. Patrick's Church. It was crowned with a shining slate roof. It would hold five grades on the ground floor — with the high school above. Twice since the beginning, additions have been built. It now is of about double its original capacity. It has proved a pretty magnificent build-

ing. It was first occupied in the fall of 1898. Dr. Tucker of Dartmouth gave the dedicatory address. The schools of Newport took on new life from this building.

Newport felt pretty rich with the shining roof of the Richards School shining down over everything, but 25 years later, she found herself again in need of more school space. It was then, that one of our NHS graduates, Loren B. Towle of Kelleyville and West Newton, Mass., and Boston, Mass., made us a new offer, "The Towle High School."

The story of the Towle High School in itself is a remarkable tale of continued and persistent disaster. In the first place, when Mr. Towle, some 25 years after graduation from Newport High, presented his offer to build a new "high" school for Newport, the offer was accepted only under conditions unacceptable to Mr. Towle, and he withdrew his offer.

Then all "Hell's Fury" broke loose. Committees journeyed to and from West Newton and Mr. Towle finally reinstated his offer.

The work started. When the roof was nearly completed, the roofing contractor died, two other sub-contractors died and when the building was about half done, Mr. Towle unexpectedly passed away, having made no provision for any further funds. He had already spent about $70,000. Newport School District took over the work, but before it was quite finished the building caught fire and was heavily damaged.

In the face of all of these misfortunes, it was difficult for Newport people to keep in mind the fact that this was, after all, Newport's largest gift up to that time.

Well, somehow or other the new Towle building got built, and has been known by the Towle name ever since — Towle High School. The name eliminates Newport as a side-partner, although Newport put in a major portion of the cost — and furnishes most of the students.

But the Towle School, isn't all Towle. Eleven years before Mr. Towle, Frank O. Chellis graduated from Newport High. He was a lawyer and close friend of Mr. Towle. But Mr. Chellis was also an early headmaster and a very public-spirited man, and for his services in connection with this school, the name "Chellis Auditorium" was given the building's assembly hall. The Towle estate in Newton, came into the possession of the Catholic Diocese and is still one of the show places of its city.

Col. Seth Richards

Seth Mason Richards, son of Dexter, grandson of Seth, and great-grandson of Leonard, our pioneer, was born in 1850, lived here all of his life, and did his full share of contributing to the improvement and welfare of the town. To be sure he started no banks, built no libraries and gave no schools. These things had all been done before his time. But he was a good leader, and many things happened because of his leadership.

In 1878, he married Lizzie, granddaughter of Deacon Farnsworth, old time Newport merchant and founder of the Baptist Church, whose son Oliver, followed mercantile pursuits in Boston and became father of Lizzie Richards. Late in life Deacon Joseph, married the widow of Col. William Cheney, also a staunch Baptist, and thus were combined two of Newport's wealthiest families.

Mrs. Seth Richards proved no less able and public spirited than was Mrs. Dexter. It was through her influence in later years, when a fire seriously damaged the Richards Block, that the building was restored to its full size — against the advice of less bread-minded folk, who wanted to see it reduced. Her chief monument, however is the South Church parsonage, her gift to the church, one of the beautiful residences of the town.

Well endowed, the library functioned beautifully for many years. But in time, of course, the rising of prices rendered the endowment insufficient, even after a later addition by Deacon Richards of another $10,000. To

the rescue, way down near the middle of our own century, came an organization called "Friends of the Library" headed by Raymond P. Holden, North Newport author, poet and an affiliate of the "Book of the Month Club," which has been a strong help.

Dexter Richards and his wife, Louisa Hatch Richards, lived to a good old age, as they well deserved, and died full of years and of honors. A bronze tablet recounting some of their many virtues and good works, will be found at the rear of the South Congregational Church auditorium — almost the only such memorial in town.

The fourth generation of the Richards family in Newport produced another remarkable man in the person of Seth M. Richards, who was Dexter's eldest son. This man built, a little north of the Dexter Richards house, a new residence which now, 70 years later, remains one of the most notable private residences in the state.

Seth M. became in course of time not only Newport's representative but a senator, and a member of the official family of Gov. Henry M. Quimby, a member of the Governor's Council. He also like his father, was near the close of his life, prominently mentioned for the governorship. His house has more recently been known by the name of his son-in-law, Maj. D. Sidney Rollins, whose widow still makes it her home.

George B. Wheeler

Newport was startled, not so very long ago, to learn that with the death of George Baldwin Wheeler — for 30 years one of the owners of The Argus, a half million dollars — more or less — had been devised to the town. This was to be divided between the Hospital and the public schools, with little restriction upon its use.

George B. Wheeler came from a very distinguished family hereabout. The Wheelers came from that strip of land over near Cornish, which seems about half to belong to Croydon, and which produced the Stowes, Met-

calfs and other excellent people. George B.'s father was Col. Edmund Wheeler, producer of that History of Newport often referred to in his work. George was a lonely sort of man — never married — and possessing an impediment of speech which led to a lonely life. He was not anti-social — he merely did not want to bother people. So he just sat alone and studied things out. And to much purpose. It is true he inherited a good deal of money, but he made much more. Chiefly through careful study and appraisal of the stock market. The great panic of 1929 wiped out many less careful investors. But not George Wheeler. Well did he know the market. He considered its prices crazy and failed to consider them permanent. He saw the crash coming. And well in advance HE SOLD OUT. Then he had plenty of capital to reinvest at conservative costs. And finally he gave all his winnings to the town, save a few personal bequests. And so among other things, we have as a physical part of the Towle High School, the "Wheeler Gymnasium" cheerfully ignoring the possibility that Mr. Wheeler himself in all probability never was in such a place in his life.

But his name joins those of our great benefactors, and not only that but leads them in the extent of his benefactions. Vive! Wheeler.

The Rowells

The well-known Rowell family of Newport comes from an incident which happened in our neighboring town of Croydon about 150 years ago. Wheeler says, in speaking of Stephen Rowell born in 1802, "when an infant, sleeping in his mother's arms, **she** was killed by lightning, while he (Stephen) escaped unharmed." Stephen's sons, Franklin P. of Newport and Irving C. of Sunapee, were both industralists and men of strong understanding. It was Judge Franklin P. (he of the bright red cape and tall silk hat) who gave Newport its current playground and it was his son, Jesse R. Rowell, who has represented Newport more terms in the two branches of the Legislature, than has any other man. It was he also (F. P.) who many years ago furnished Newport with the

handsome stone drinking fountain which still adorns our public square.

Speaking of Jesse R. again, it was he who has recently given the town a new and needed parking lot near South Main St.

I well remember hearing some prominent citizens urging Judge Rowell (although not a lawyer, he was judge of our Police Court for many years) — urging the Judge to make this gift on the ground that he could do it without cost to himself (income tax deductions) and at the same time benefit the town.

Jesse's son, Mac Rowell, has for a long time been one of our most highly skilled band and choir leaders. The town owes quite a good deal to the Rowells; the family has also been prominently identified with our industrial life, as Judge Rowell was one of the five men who established the Brampton Woolen Co. somewhere around the turn of the century.

While the name Richards heads our list of benefactors, it by no means ends it. A great many others in various degree, have also been generous; Judge Rowell with his fountain and playground; Mr. Wilmarth with his handsome Pine Grove; the Haserlats with their memorial picnic area; the various benefactors of the Carrie Wright or Newport Hospital and West Newton, Mass. and finally the half million dollar bequest of George B. Wheeler of The Argus to be divided between the schools and the hospital.

Back-tracking a little in time, we find that near the end of the century, Newport, then struggling with the problem of adequate schools, accepted a surprise offer of Dexter Richards to give the town a new and modern upper-grade and high school — to be called The Richards School. Dexter appropriated $25,000 for the purpose, his wife added $2,500 to give the building white trimmings of granite. A site was secured on what was then "Chase St." now School. Like the library, the school was built in the style of the day, with a big black roof, seemingly too big for the building. You can see dozens of these anywhere about the country.

The Lewises

A man who had a finger in most every conspicious pie for a good many years, was George E. Lewis — chief of the Fire Dept., Town Moderator and, when he had nothing else to do, treasurer of the Newport Savings Bank. It can probably be truly said that no man ever had the interests of the town more closely at heart than did George Ellery Lewis.

His influence was felt far outside of Newport too, for in his capacity as an "Odd Fellow" he laid the corner stone of the Odd Fellows Home in Concord, and always took care of its welfare.

Out of all these activities, Mr. Lewis' real consuming interest was in the Fire Dept. of which we was a member for more than 50 years, and Chief for about 25. He was a member of the legislature several times and kept close tab on its activities. His house was the first to be built on Belknap Ave. — the one now occupied by Bert Teague.

Mr. Lewis loved to travel, was one of the few Newport men to visit Chicamauga Park during the Spanish War and usually managed to get wherever he desired to go. "Bank Business!" This was not wholly imaginary as most eastern banks at that time held western mortgages and these required occasional visits. He was president of the N. H. Saving Bank Assn. in 1932 (the worst year of the great depression) was also a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1930.

In later years when anyone asked George his age he would reply "I was born the year Fort Sumpter was fired upon," well knowing that this answer would enlighten his listener but little.

Col. Sam DeWolf Lewis

Many people thought of George E. and Sam D. Lewis as brothers. Matter of fact they were cousins, the latter was cashier of the First National Bank, which is housed with Newport Savings. Sam D. was noted less as a banker than for his interest in building. Evi-

dence of his handiwork meets the eye almost anywhere you look in Newport. The DeWolf block he built in 1894.

He was also our most widely traveled business man, for he inspected the Panama Canal in 1913, and attended the great Dewey reception in Washington in 1899, this time as a Colonel on Governor Quimby's staff. He was elected selectman in 1905. He was also chief architect of our highly artistic Episcopal Church. Col. Lewis died Sept. 13, 1943, his death antedating that of his only grandson, Lewis Sibley, killed at Remagen Bridge on the Rhine in Germany. His wife, Maude I. Lewis, was the first president of the Newport Womans Club and his daughter, Goldina Lewis Sibley, is the present president of the board of trustees of Newport Hospital.

It was back in the late 1880's that Seth Mason Richards, son of Dexter, bought the spacious lot on which stood the old Edmund Burke house, moved it down onto the then new Belknap Ave., and set about erecting a new and beautiful house for himself and four daughters.

Finally in 1962 Mrs. Louise Rollins, second daughter of Col. Seth M. Richards and widow of Dartmouth notable D. Sidney Rollins solved the problem of what disposition to make of a place obviously too big for any modern size family, by giving it to her grandfather's old charity for modern-day library purposes.

It was a most happy solution. The house is big enough to provide ample space on the ground floor for the Richards Free Library, and still provide plenty of living space above for Mrs. Rollins herself. She also provided the answer to doubting critics who wondered how much such an expensive place could be supported, by also providing an extra endowment.

The old library was adequate for a town of Newport's 1890 size with about 12,000 volumes, but it is in no respect adequate for our 20th century requirements. So the old library has been sold to a bank to make room for a new building to cost maybe a quarter million dollars.

CHAPTER XIII

CIVIL WAR

Now that we are actually launched on the task of reviewing the great events of the American Civil War, "the war between the states" as polite northern folks say down South, trying to avoid any reference to the "rebellion," let us tell how all these matters were received here in Newport.

After months, even years of smouldering fire, the country was electrified by the firing upon Ft. Sumpter in the harbor of Charleston, So. Carolina, garrisoned by 70 federal artillerymen, and commanded by Major Robert Anderson. This was the event which set everything aflame. Newport and its sister towns, be it remembered, were pretty far back communities, telephone and telegraph lines existed, to be sure but no branch reached back this far.

"Sumpter's walls said to be crumbling," said one report, "Steamer 'Star of the West' turned back," said another. "Lincoln calls for 75,000 men for three months," said final dispatch. Crowded war meetings became the focus of all interest. Patriots were vociferous — "every man should enlist" shouted a loyalist from the Pike Hill district.

"Well, why don't **you** enlist, Ole feller?" shouted a heckler from the gallery of the old town hall, the scene of all these exciting meetings. "Oh! I'm too old to learn military ticktaks," replied the patriot from Pike Hill.

A young lawyer, son of State Senator Levi W. Barton was the hero of the moment, having been appointed recruiting officer, and true to the usage of the moment, he soon completed the roster of his company, and was appointed Captain.

He was a born soldier, and soon became Lieutenant Col. Later in the war he raised a regiment of field artillery under Col. Long of Claremont. He is always referred to as "Ira McL. Barton" but what the "McL." stood for seems to have been lost. He liked the army so

well, he was later commissioned in the regular establishment, and became provost marshal of some place in Arkansas.

The remains of one of Capt. Barton's men named Woodbury, were returned here, probably the only man to be thus honored, a memorial service was held by the Rev. Paul S. Adams, then pastor of the Baptist Church, who in a redhot prayer asked that "all Rebels be sent to Hell."

The year 1860 started off with a bad fire, which in three hours reduced the handsome Newport House to ashes. Two New London men were afterward indicted for arson. The day after the fire, the energetic Cross Brothers, proprietors of the Newport House, moved into the closed Eagle Hotel and continued business. The Newport House was immediately rebuilt and reopened on Dec. 19, with a party and dance for about 200 people.

The School Board authorized formation of a company of Cadets, which afterwards furnished a good many officers for the Army.

For better or for worse, the long expected "War to preserve the Union" was on. Newport was heavily involved. Town meeting after Town meeting passed votes providing $60, $200, and finally $600 relief money for enlistee's and their families. The town emerged after four years of this, with a total loss of 30 men and a war debt of something over $72,000. With a total population of little over 2,000, this was a pretty severe burden.

There are some matters connected with the Civil War which modern young people or even veterans of later wars, will find difficulty in understanding. Old soldiers tell us that when a man became dissatisfied with his own outfit, it was not unusual for him to wander off and join some other. Sometimes he was listed as a deserter, sometimes his name was simply removed from the company rolls. But sometimes on the contrary, he was shot.

In their carefree way Newport earned an unexplained record of 30 deserters. Actually but one Newport man was a known deserter, and he afterward died in a hospital. But the more puzzling thing was the draft law. If a man was drafted, it was considered a perfectly honorable thing to furnish a "substitute." This was sometimes done by the town responsible for a certain number of recruits — more often by the draftee at his own expense. This system resulted in a great deal of unnecessary expense to the towns, but more important, was the presence in the army of many undesirable men. This explains Newport's 30 "deserters." "Substitutes" — as one town history remarks, "a reproach to the Army and a disgrace to the human race."

The news of the taking of Ft. Sumpter was received here on April 15, 1861, and on the 22nd a big war meeting was held at the Town Hall. This would mean the building now called the "Grange Hall," in the rear of the County Records Building. The Town Hall was on the ground floor — the County Court room above. This latter had a gallery which was closed for many years, but was finally reopened for Grange use.

The meeting, referred to, voted to raise $1,500 "to outfit" our volunteers. Whether this meant, in the local view that volunteers were expected to appear "armed and equipped," like an old fashioned muster, nobody knows. Anyway on April 27, Captain Barton and his men departed for Concord. Even the disbanded Columbian Artillery Company, under S. H. Edes, long inactive, was called into being and voted "to go ahead" — 20 men enlisted.

On June 29, we had the two military companies from Goshen here to train; the Newport and Acworth bands were here to assist and somebody served all hands a dinner. There were speeches on the Common, and said our unknown recorder, "it was a fine display." Another note says "the Republican — Wide-Awakes, 140 strong" paraded. Of course these events were in the early days of the war. Later war became less a matter of display. Of the 30 men Newport lost, about half

were lost through camp diseases, and the rest through enemy action.

Through all these war years, Bradford was Newport's rail head. Everybody had to "stage it" to Bradford, regardless of the weather or season. This state of affairs continued until 1872.

ADMIRAL BELKNAP

Rear Admiral George E. Belknap was Newport's ranking "sea Soldier." He was graduated from Annapolis in its third Class, fought in China and Formosa, saved the Hawaiian royal family in a riot and made surveys for the first Pacific cables. Belknap Ave. is named for him. At its head, on Pine St., stands a boulder supporting an 8-inch cannon ball. This was fired from Ft. Fisher at Belknap's ship, the Cannonicus ironclad, and striking the inclined sides, bounded high in air and came down through the deck. It was mounted in its present position by Reprisal Chapter, D.A.R. The six big oak trees on the street, were a gift to the town from the Admiral.

Admiral George E. Belknap

CHAPTER XIV

A CIVIL WAR DIARY

Some of the events on the Home Front

This diary of the Civil War years, 1860 to 1866, cannot be credited, inasmuch as we do not know for certain, who the diarist was. However, the items, evidently a copy of the original, were found in an old tattered copy of Wheeler's History of Newport, and most probably Edmond Wheeler, himself, was the writer.

Beginning with the big Newport House fire, he appears to be impressed by Edmond Burke's generosity. This was the man who had been a congressman 15 years before, and Commissioner of Patents in Washington. The Joel Kelsey, who died March 6, was one of the Killingworth settlers and was a soldier of the Revolution. He was a prisoner of war in the infamous Old Sugar House prison in New York. His grave is in the old Pine St. cemetery.

The war meetings were said to have been held in the "Town Hall". This refers, of course, to the "old" town hall, now more or less known as the Grange Hall. A newer Town Hall was built after the war in 1877, burned and was replaced by the present building in 1888.

Under date of Oct. 6. The band referred to was composed of 18 pieces, and was assigned as a brigade band. This was a nine-months organization, and broke up after its discharge.

In 1864, it will be noted that Abraham Lincoln received 260 votes to Gen. McClellan's 242. This was almost exactly the party vote in 1860, showing that the electorate of that day stuck pretty strictly to party lines.

What An Observer Saw In Newport During The War Years: 1860

Friday, Jan. 6. Fire alarm at midnight. "Newport House" in ashes in three hours. Edmond Burke gave Landlord Cross a check for $50. Following day

Mr. Cross moved into "Eagle Block." Mrs. Boothe has a party with "Bean Porridge" for lunch.

Jan. 18. Two men from New London were tried and bound over for setting fire to the Newport House. Gov. Colby and six others are bondsmen.

March 6. Joel Kelsey died aged 100 years. (See note above)

March 8. Map of Sullivan County delivered.

March 10. Last day of town meeting. Raised money $4,000, highways $1,500, reservoir, $200 engine house, etc. $75. Selectmen may buy a town farm for $1,500.

March 22. Cost of new school house in District No. 2. $475.

May 19. Heard this evening that Abraham Lincoln was nominated for President and that A. Hamlin for v. President.

May 22. Republicans drew flag poles.

May 20. Alman Tandy's buildings burned. Two barns at Sunapee struck by lightning and a Mrs. Hastings killed. Also Elija Rider's barn was burned.

June 4 and 5. Republicans raised flag poles with two streamers and fired 32 guns.

Sept. 5. Prof. Donaldson walked the wire across Court House yard. Large attendance.

Oct. 21. Republican "Wide Awakes" 144, out to drill, and a torchlight procession.

Nov. 5. ELECTION DAY. Lincoln, 278, Douglass 216, Breckenridge 15, Bell 15.

Nov. 8. Republicans celebrate Lincoln's election with parade and supper.

Dec. 14. Dedication of the Newport House, 200 guests; bands played.

1861

Jan. 3. Dedication Ball at Newport House.

Jan. 24. Georgia seceded from Union today.

March 9. An attempt to rob the bank.

March 12, 13 and 14. Town meeting required three days.

April 12. Fort Sumpter attacked at 4 o'clock.

April 13. Walls at Ft. Sumpter giving way.

April 14. Was told that Ft. Sumpter was taken.

April 15. War news confirmed. Lincoln calls for 75,000 volunteers.

April 22. Big war meeting in town hall. Voted to raise $1,500 to fit out our volunteers.

April 27. Volunteers started for Concord.

May 4. Old Columbian artillery called out by S. H. Edes. Resolved to go ahead. Got 20 signers.

June 29. Military out training tonight. The Engine Co. invited the two military companies of Goshen to train. Served them a dinner. Had Newport and Acworth bands. A fine display. Speeches on the Common.

July 8. Big ride to Sunapee Lake from Newport and Claremont.

July 22. Bad news. Battle at Bull Run. Federals repulsed.

Aug. 10. Reception of volunteers. Band, Fire Co., supper at Cross' (Newport House). Speeches at town hall.

Aug. 27. Was told that James Breck was worth $42,000 when he left town. (See story on Eagle Hotel-Editor).

Sept. 1. A novelty: a young lady called wearing high heeled shoes.

Sept. 20 Part of Claremont volunteers were here this evening.

Sept. 26. National Fast Day. John Wildsh (?) made an abolition speech and Rev. Paul S. Adams prayed that the Rebels might be all sent to Hell.

Sept. 29. Rev. Adams preached to the soldiers in the evening at the South Church.

Sept. 30. Soldiers started for Concord; about 75. Were cheered when they started off.

Oct. 26. Men here buying horses for Vermont cavalry. Bought several.

Oct. 30 Sunapee band and company out. 25 enlisted.

Dec. 23. George E. Belknap of U.S. Navy married to Ellen Reed. Paul J. Wheeler, Edmond Burke, and Aiken were there. The following evening the band gave them a concert and a band dance was given in

the town hall in the evening. (See Belknap story — Ed.)

1862

Jan. 19. Rev. P. S. Adams preached a sermon at the North church on a Mr. Woodbury, a soldier in Barton's Company, whose body was brought here.

May 29. George Hall came to town. He was on board the Cumberland when the Merrimack sunk her.

June 28. Fuss in the school about the itch. Sent scholars to Dr. Swett to be examined.

July 26. War meeting at Town Hall. Voted to raise $50 a piece for volunteers. P. J. Wheeler pledged himself to give $10 apiece to the first 25 when mustered into service.

Aug. 1. War meeting at Claremont. The band and republicans went out. War meeting at Town Hall. Capt. Cooper and Ed Kelsey enlisted.

Nov. 19. Daniel Muzzey and a Mr. Dunham were buried up in F. W. Lewis' ditch on Sunapee St. by a slide. Were both dug out alive although buried some three feet underground for some time.

Nov. 25. Town Meeting. Voted that the Selectmen provide substitutes to fill the town's quota under the new law: $300 apiece.

Dec. 11. Edes started his new aqueduct water for the first time. One "right"—a pint a minute. $2 a year.

1863

Jan. 16. Great freshet. William Endicott and son got into the water all over on the intervale.

March 11. Bells all rung at 6:30 p.m. guns fired.

March 12. Fired cannon at 4 a.m. and bells rung. On news of capture of Richmond. Evening intelligence—Richmond was not taken.

Aug. 16. Town meeting. Voted to raise $50 (each) for volunteers and $200 for the Soldiers Aid.

Aug. 20. Meeting at Town Hall. Voted to raise the bounty another $50.

Aug. 21. Town Meeting. Voted to pay the drafted soldiers $300 apiece.

Aug. 24. The band returned this evening and played as they went through the village. The band given a reception at Cross'.

Aug. 28. All stores and shops were shut up at 5 o'clock for a grand military parade for helping enlistments.

Sept. 3. Town Meeting. Voted to pay volunteers $100 bounty.

Sept. 13. The band enlisted for the war.

Oct. 6. The nine-months soldiers drilled.

Oct. 8. The band gave a farewell concert at the town hall.

1864

Jan. 16. Limb of tree fell and killed Carroll W. Peabody in Dexter Peabody' woods.

Sept. 3. Town Meeting. Voted to pay soldiers $600 for one year, $700 for two-year men, and $900 for three-year men. This adding $16,000 to the debt of the town.

Oct. 7. Republican mass meeting. 40 ladies and 75 men rode horseback.

Oct. 8. Democratc mass meeting. Fine display through the village. The cannon burst.

Oct. 20. Republican mass meeting at Claremont 45 teams went from Newport.

Nov. 2. Grand Democratic mass meeting at Claremont, 15,000 present and six bands.

Nov. 8. Town Meeting. Lincoln 260. McClellan 242.

1865

April 4. Celebrated the fall of Richmond tonight.

April 15. News of President Lincoln's death came to town.

April 16. Bells all tolled and flag trimmed on account of Lincoln's death.

April 17. Meeting at Town Hall on account of Lincoln's death. Passed series of resolutions to be put on file. Speeches.

April 19. Funeral of Lincoln services at South Church, whch was trimmed with flags and in black,

CHAPTER XV
TOWN HALL FIRE

Conflagration of 1885 Destroyed Five Buildings

Pay attention to me now, my children, because I'm going to take you back into a Newport that you do not know. The year is 1885. The month is June — June 27 to be exact. Eight years earlier the town had moved a residence from the Town Hall site, down onto Ash St., (where it still stands, furthest North of the houses) to make room for the new building, designed to house the County offices on the first floor, the Town Hall above, and, on the third floor, two halls. One was for the Odd Fellows Lodge, the other to care for our Civil War veterans, then organized as the Grand Army of the Republic.

Just North and very close to this building stood a private residence, called, I believe, the bank building, because it was the original home of the First National Bank of Newport, and its companion, the Newport Savings Bank. At this time the house was occupied by the growing families of Ashton W. Rounsevel, A. D. Howard and a Mr. Harris. This is the present site of The DeWolf. Moving north again we find the present Lewis Block ground taken up by a large wooden building called the Nettleton Block (1854). This extended clear up to the corner of Sunapee St., then eastward along Sunapee, we find first, the American Express office and then a livery stable, occupied by one Prescott. Main St. here is wide, which was fortunate; Sunapee St. is fairly wide also. Out in the middle of Main St., opposite the Newport House, was a large reservoir, which is still there.

Newport's fire-fighting equipment at that time consisted of two hand tubs, The Dexter, engine 1, and the Torrent, engine 2. There were, of course, no fire hydrants, and wouldn't be for another seven years. There existed then, a keen rivalry between Engine 1 and Engine 2. In fact in their keenness to be first at some fire, Engine 1, on one occasion took a wheel off No. 2, in order to get in where they wanted to be. These old hand pumps did a very respectable job of pumping water, but at great expense of man-power, frequent relays of men

being required to man the "brakes" as the long poles were called, running the length of the contraption on either side, with eight or 10 men each to pull them up and down — which action furnished the power necessary to throw the stream.

Certain men were designated as "fire wards." They were provided with six foot poles, painted red. The fire wards had power to order any citizen to take his turn on the brakes. This he did by touching him on the shoulder with his wand. Pumping the engine came under the head of hard work.

June 27, a Saturday, was graduation night for Newport's High School. It was the ninth graduation, and the school was turning out a class of eight. Graduation was a bigger community event than it now is, and the hall was packed. All went off successfully, and finally the Rev. Halsey Leavitt of the Baptist Church pronounced the Benediction. These solemn words were the last to be spoken in the old Town Hall. Unofficial remarks, later of some of the firemen, may have sounded the same but were actually, less pious.

Over in the gabled Nettleton Block, upstairs, was located the town's newspaper, called at that time the New Hampshire Argus & Spectator. Some law offices were also located there, including that of the Hon. Albert Scripture Wait, whose library was accounted one of the finest in the state. It was insured for $3,000. On the street floor were stores, including that of E. L. Nelson afterward a noted 5 & 10 cent store operator.

Nobody ever knew just how this fire started — or if he did know, wouldn't tell. But it was generally agreed that it started in the attic of the Nettleon Block, three doors and two buildings away from the Town Hall. There always seemed to be a bit of mystery as to just what did happen. Some people referred darkly to the beer parties that used to take place up in the top of the Town Hall. But the fire didn't reach that point for two hours. I should expect, as a real fact, that the loft over The Argus office was full of rubbish — fire inspections hadn't yet been heard of. Anyway the alarm was raised about one o'clock a.m. No hydrants, also no fire alarm, and wouldn't be until after the Eagle Mills burned seven or eight years later. No, anybody who discovered a fire

just stuck his (or her) head out and yelled. And whoever heard the yelling ran to the nearest bell-rope and clanged the bell. In this case it was the Town Hall bell, followed by the Unitarian, just across the street, then the bells up and down and to the east took up the clamor. Newport soon found out that big trouble was afoot. And turned out in force.

Right back of the Town Hall there used to be an engine house, and I guess it was there in 1885. But old Dexter used to be kept in a little house on the South side of "Court House Common," and it may have been there when this fire broke out. Anyway, both pieces were on the scene as soon as the members could make it, and started in their work. No rivalry this time — everybody knew that Newport had the fight of its life on hand.

But before any one knew what was happening, and at a moment when available pumpers were about played out, it was discovered that the fire had somehow bridged the gap between the various buildings and was actually nibbling at the Town Hall itself.

That was the signal for a wild scrambling around. The Nettleton Block and the Bank building became minor concerns, but our new Town Hall! Scramble, boys and make it fast. Soon about 20 men were busy inside, removing stuff from the top floor halls. There was a new concert Chickering grand piano in the main hall. The effort upstairs soon had to be abandoned. The Chickering was eased over to the head of the fire escape, but just then, with a horrid roar, the roof started caving in. Fire Chief Martin Whittier jumped. Others in the gallery jumped to the floor. One or two hopped out through the three Main Street entrances. Others never knew just how they did escape. The new Chickering concert grand, left to its own devices, rolled majestically down the inclined plane of the fire escape, and landed all in one piece, at the bottom. Nobody was seriously hurt. Many, including several Civil War veterans still in the fire department, got the scare of their lives. The next Argus said it was a miracle a half dozen or more men were not killed.

The loss was summed up in the next issue of The Argus, (which had to be printed on the Claremont Eagle presses) as being about $75,000. This did not take into

account, however, loss to the County of Sullivan of real estate records, restoring of which so far as possible was a considerable item of expense to the county for years and years. Neither did the estimate include value of the files of The Argus, 60 years worth, including some of the years when it was published in Claremont, restoration of which consumed many years. It was a thing not easily reckoned in money. The proprietors did rescue a copy of their subscription list — any newspaper's most valued possession — and did save their account books. As those were days in which cash settlement of accounts took place, usually, but once or twice a year, this doubtless saved quite a heavy loss. Losses without doubt finally came to the not inconsiderable figure of $100,000.

It was three years before all losses were adjusted, plans drawn up and the new Town Hall (our present one) built. Citizens who are inclined to be discouraged over present day lack of public interest in public affairs, will be interested in the fact that four town meetings had to be called before enough attendance could be secured to get a legal vote to use the insurance money, $20,000, to rebuild. With the hall in ruins, just what did the town do for a meeting place? They went down Pearl St., and met in the roller skating rink opposite Calvin Brown's summer hotel. The building is now used to house some of Rowell Bros.' supplies. So a new building at last appeared. Built on the same foundation as the old one, and on somewhat the same lines — only better. The town did not again try to stretch a point and provide halls above the auditorium. Main St. entrances were reduced to one. The architect was Hira R. Beckwith of Claremont.

Newport must have heaved a sigh of relief when the last brick was in place, for it was confidentially expected that now the Court House was destroyed, Claremont would renew the old contest and try to secure the status of County Seat. In fact Claremont did try it out, but the attempt was somewhat half-hearted, and the effort "died aborning."

At all events, you may be sure that the morning of June 28, 1885 would have been a poor time to attempt borrowing a few thousand dollars in Newport. The bot-

tom had pretty much dropped out. And it took quite a lot of work to get it back in. Six years were to pass by before the immense bill board, which covered the ruin of the old bank building was to give way to new construction. Seven long years. Then Col. Sam. DeWolf Lewis determined to build a three story block to be called the DeWolf. Several of the people afterward known as Ellenbergers — refugees from Ellenburg, N. Y. — had their first employment here helping build this new building. Just why the opportunity to buy the site and avoid having another building so close in, was not taken advantage of, deponent knows not. I suppose it was then regarded as too expensive. It now must be looked upon as one of Newport's major errors.

AFTERMATH

The consequences of this catastrophe were varied and far-reaching. The most obvious one may have been the building, the very next year (1886) of the Lewis Block, which still holds an important place in the village scene. Fred'k Lewis, cashier of the First National Bank, was a half-owner, and he bought the interest of Mrs. Bela Nettleton, who owned the other half, and which, so the press informs us, was uninsured, and lost little time in replacing the building, this time using brick, which still endures.

CHAPTER XVI

SPANISH AMERICAN WAR

Mexican Border Service at Laredo, Texas

The Spanish American War of 1898 caught Newport, like the United States as a whole, in a state of almost total mental unpreparedness for war. There had been no large scale preparation in more than a quarter century. But it was well prepared in that it had lately enlisted a brand new company of militia entitled Co. "M" 3rd. N. H. Inf. with Capt. Ira Stowell, a hardware merchant, as commander.

Company "M" was officered by well trained men, Capt. Stowell having been a lieutenant in an older militia company and his lieutenants, Glynn and Lewis, having acquired more or less military lore; the NCO's also were men of military experience.

The battleship MAINE was blown up in Havana harbor, and war soon followed. Company "M" was drafted into Federal Service as Company "M", 1st N. H. Volunteers, a composite of the three N. H. Regiments. It did not go to Cuba, but suffered all the discomforts of poor engineering and poor sanitation at Chicamaugua Park, where typhoid and other needless diseases were rampant, and where Capt. Stowell and one private died. The body of the captain was returned here and received with full military honors. The band played "Onward Christian Soldier" as interment was made in Maple St. cemetery. Company "M", was, unofficially, known as "The Stowell Guards" for many years.

Mexican Border Service

The Stowell Guards remained in existence for a good many years. In February, 1913 a vacancy occurred, and Samuel H. Edes became C. O., with Vincent J. Brennan Jr. and Harry C. Hastings, as first and second lieutenants. In a few months, the company was called into Federal Service again by President Woodrow Wilson to

help police the Mexican Border, which was then being plagued and threatened by "Pancho" Villa and other desperadoes. The outfit wound up at Laredo, Texas, camping in an onion patch under a hot sun, 99° of heat. Here the regiment remained all summer and into a cooling Fall. "M" and another company took up the patrol at Perron's Ranch, 35 miles up river. Lieutenants John Taylor and Charles Bowen, (afterwards Adjutant General of New Hampshire) had joined by this time and served with M until the end of the campaign.

The company was mustered out at Manchester and returned home just in time to participate in the first Newport Winter Carnival, Washington's Birthday, 1916. Diplomatic relations had already been severed with Germany, and our men returned to civil life with their fingers crossed, momentarily expecting to be called back into uniform. Nor were they disappointed.

CHAPTER XVII

THE WORLD WARS

Newport's contingent of the National Guard, enroute from several months' duty on the Mexican Border, was wending its way homeward, when the train, somewhere near Binghamton, N. Y., was met by the news that President Wilson had severed diplomatic relations with Germany and the central powers. The men had had several months of military life, and were all set for returning to family and regular occupations. The outfit was given a rousing welcome home, but delayed resuming regular occupations. New tables of organization were received showing that a "company" of infantry, instead of having less than 100 men, would henceforth consist of six officers and 250 enlisted men — in short that a "company" would become nearer of battalion strength, and, while the commander would still be a captain, he would have the duties and responsibilities of a major.

Newport, therefore, was faced with a considerable task of recruitment and supply. Surrounding towns were solicited for men, and so good was the response that when the "company" left town on July 15, 1915 there were about 175 men in the ranks. They were a wild and woolly looking outfit, too. Every man was furnished with some piece of equipment, hats, rifles, shirts — but only a few really had a complete outfit.

But neither the Kaiser, nor any other man knew that here was as valiant and light hearted a body of men as ever marched from any town. Their uniforms may have been a mess but their courage was a steady light.

The old regiment had served alongside the 2nd Maine down at Laredo and now the two regiments were combined to make up the new 103rd Infantry, 26th division, which was afterwards called the YD division, General Clarence Edwards commanding. Gone were the state insignia. Proudly every man wore the "U.S." on collar and cap. Whenever in any authorized grade, the number of men showed an excess, the residue were

transferred into the new 1st Army Headquarters Regiment, designed chiefly as military police.

The main body joined forces with the men from Augusta, Maine, spent a few weeks at Westfield, Mass., then moving under secret orders, entrained for Newark, N. J., transferred to a White Star Liner, and sailed for Halifax. After a two-weeks' voyage zigzaging pretty much all over the North Atlantic, they arrived in England, spent an uncomfortable 10 days near Aldershot, England and boarded a Thames River side-wheeler which after an all-night dash to the French coast landed them at LeHarve. Here began our doughboys' experience with the French Forty-et-eight — the standard French box car, which, according to the Americans, is always equipped with square wheels. Anyway they crossed France, skirting the large cities, and arrived at Neufchatteau, up in the Vosges.

Quartered mostly in barns, the Americans remained all winter, training with the French troops, whose philosophy of warfare was mostly incomprehensible to the Americans. Eventually they reverted to their own standards. From here they served in most of the well-remembered French sectors. Their great moment came when the Germans started their last drive on Paris. The 103rd occupied the very hinge position of the forces opposing them, and after a tough scrap in front of Belleau Wood sent the Germans reeling back toward Northern France. This was the last German effort to move upon Paris. Soon after, the war came to a halt, with the armistice of Nov. 11, 1918.

That was the end of hostilities, but the forces could not yet be demobilized. It was spring before many troops actually moved toward home. This is the trying part of any war — all objectives are removed. Many men yield to the temptation to go AWOL. Discipline becomes difficult. Eventually, however, the trip toward home begins. Again we march on an embarkation point, board a liner — this time a transformed German — and eventually come into a home port. There was a gigantic review in Boston, a short delay at point of discharge, and HOME.

The 103rd YD regiment was disbanded, and so remains except that now, these men hold an annual reunion for recalling old times and common experiences. Newport has had the honor of hosting one of these reunions, recalled by the membership as one of the best to have been held.

Something over a year after the National Guard in New Hampshire was reorganized, Newport again found itself on the military map. But this time the new regiment was to be anti-aircraft, and Newport was scheduled to head the machine-gun part of the regiment, with firing batteries in Berlin, Keene, Franklin and Nashua. Newport furnishing the headquarters detail, about 20 men. Capt. Edes with Capt. Shepard as adjutant, was to command. Newport got a WPA appropriation for a new National Guard armory, which, appropriately enough, was placed on Belknap Ave. This was the arrangement up to the beginning of World War II.

World War II found Newport with a small but complete outfit and heading a Battalion of machine guns, one-half a regiment of Anti-aircraft. This was known as the 197th Anti-Aircraft. The regiment was assigned to duty at Palatious, Texas, where it continued training until Pearl Harbor. Declaration of war soon followed, and the 197th had to back-track to help in the Anti-Aircraft defense of New York City. But this was only the beginning of its travels. Action in the South Pacific was indicated, and the regiment picked up its big guns and headed for San Francisco and Australia.

It took up various positions in Australia, and then took ship for New Guinea, where it did the same until orders arrived for the invasion of the Philippines. The regiment was by this time in a high state of training and spear-headed the invasion of Leyte, South Philippines. In this action the battalion covered the landing of the forces, and got well commended for the efficiency of its action.

When peace came, the battalion found itself half a world away from home, but the return was commenced

without undue delay, and finally the men found themselves again at the home fireside, having traveled more than the circumference of the earth — a travel record equalled by few units in the whole Army. This somewhat detailed history of the 197th AA (Coast Artillary) is given here since it was Newport's only really organized unit. It went out under Lt. Barton of Claremont, who remained with the army and is now a full colonel. Capt. Shepard became disabled through an accidental dose of bad vaccine, from which he has never recovered. Major Edes after a term with the 20th CA was retired for age before the regiment started on its wanderings.

Off to World War I—Company M, First New Hampshire, July 27, 1917, Capt. S. H. Edes, commanding. Nuts to you, Kaiser Bill!

CHAPTER XVIII
VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS

Revolutionary Veterans Never Organized

The first record we have of any public appearance of war veterans as such, is found in the illuminated Baldwin Book now unfortunately not available, locally. In it, Samuel Baldwin of the Argus recalls that at the reception to the Marquis de LaFayette "a long line of Revolutionary veterans appeared and were affectionately and tearfully individually greeted by the great French hero. Young Baldwin was not favorably impressed. He thought this honor, instead of going to this line of "shabby old men" should have been accorded to the spruced-up young militiamen of the Columbian Artillery, with their red coats, who, it seemed had also been mustered for this great occasion.

This account, however, lacks any hint that these Revolutionary veterans represented any organized effort. There never was any such organization, here or elsewhere. It was only with the coming and passing of the Civil War, that the time had arrived for an organization of veterans—and this took the form and title of "The Grand Army of the Republic," a well organized force, which bent the nation to its wishes for a matter of more than 50 years.

Locally, this outfit was known as "Fred Smyth Post No. 15, G.A.R." Fred Smyth and wife came here once and presented a handsome picture to the post. Mr. Smyth was toward its end, a war-time governor of New Hampshire. However, the precedent was set, and when the War with Spain ended, Newport promptly organized "Capt. Ira Stowell Camp, United Spanish War Veterans," which lasted throughout the first half of the twentieth century.

Scarcely had the echoes of the Armistice of 1918 which terminated World War I, rolled away, than the returning veterans, under the leadership of Capt. Harold P. Shepard and Sgt. Charles F. Aiken, took up what by then had become established custom and organized a post of the American Legion under the title of Claude J. Brewster Post No. 25. Brewster

was the first Newport boy to lose his life in the contest. After World War II the post name was changed to include, also the name of the first World War II casualty, Robert Gould, son of the the postmaster of Newport, Robert E. Gould. He was a member of our National Guard group, serving in Texas.

There was in existence at this time another organization called the Holt-Farmer Post, Veterans of Foreign Wars. But as this organization could not admit those many veterans who did not serve overseas, the Legion was preferred and still exists these 44 years later having received a strong reinforcement from the hundreds of young men and womèn who represented Newport in the later war, and also several from this and nearby towns who served in The Korean struggle.

Once organized, these bodies proceeded to set up one of our notable and very useful institutions, The Newport Veterans' Club, owning and operating the well known Lewis property on Cheney St. This club represents an investment of more than $30,000, all raised by voluntary subscription. No municipality in the state has been more generous.

Besides carrying on the regular work of a veterans' organization, Brewster-Gould Post has organized and managed three state-wide conventions, organized and financed two championship musical organizations, (drum-corps) has maintained an annual ministrel show for more than 40 years, maintained the Civil War tradition of an annual observance of Memorial Day, saw that the last of the Grand Army and Spanish war veterans were buried with suitable honors, as well as some 20 other veterans whose remains were received here. They have participated and forwarded all community patriotic enterprises, such as street decoration and school exercises; the presentation of the national colors to schools and to the local hospital. In all these matters the Legion and its Auxiliary have been assisted by the "40 & 8", the VFW and its Auxiliary and finally by the Veterans of World War I. The American Legion is pledged to a career of "usefulness to community, State and Nation," and it cer-

tainly seems that through many years, it has been faithful to this pledge.

The VFW Post was named in memory of Grant Holt, son of Mrs. Minnie Holt and of Frank Farmer, son of Frank M. Farmer afterward a Newport representative at the General Court. Both were war casualties and National Guardsmen. The post finally became "Newport Memorial Post, V. F. W."

James B. McGregor in his 108th year after voting Nov. 3, 1908, at the Town Hall, Newport, N. H.

CHAPTER XIX

NEWPORT AND THE GOVERNORSHIP

Has Newport ever in its long history had a Governor? That is, has any Newport man while living here, ever been the state's chief executive, and known as such???

This seemingly simple and clear question can be answered in several ways, none of them quite satisfactory. Let's take the case of Ralph Metcalf, who was elected Governor in 1854 and '55. He was elected as from Concord where he had been for about seven years Secretary of State. But sometime in 1856 he built a house on Broad Street in Claremont, which casts some doubt as to what town he was actually elected from. His party, the "American," was popularly known as "The Know-Nothings." It actually was a kind of secret society, members of which were wont to say, when queried about it, "I don't know." He died in Claremont in 1858. His residence in Newport was the fine old house on South Main Street, which was built by the merchant James Breck; was in modern times known as the "Bostwick" or the "Dunton" place, afterward as "The Lafayette," and has since become a second-hand shop. It was here that Lafayette was entertained in 1825. You'll find an account of that visit in another chapter. Our claim to Metcalf's being a Newport man is reinforced by the fact that in 1845 he married a Newport woman, Martha A., daughter of Captain John Gilmore.

Governor Metcalf was a native of Charlestown, studied law in Claremont, was admitted to the bar in Newport, and first practiced here, having taken over the office and practice of the much-lamented David Hale, husband of Sarah Josepha Buell Hale. He was not of the well-known Metcalf family which produced Henry Harrison Metcalf, sometime state historian, and his son, Harry B. Metcalf, owner and editor of The Argus.

Newport's next brush with the Governorship happened a few years after the Civil War. This came about through the fact that Col. Walter Harriman, a native of Warner, had been for about two years, one of the brilliantly intellectual pastors of the Universalist Church

here. Col. Harriman had acquired an enviable record as commander of the 11th N. H. Volunteers in the Civil War and was breveted a Brigadier General. He entered politics and was N. H. Secretary of State for several years, finally becoming Governor. He was a man of commanding presence, six feet two, of very noble carriage and with what has often been described as "contagious enthusiasms." His name has usually been associated with his birthplace, Warner, nevertheless Newport comes in for a share of his fame.

We seem to have had no further adventures in connection with the Chief Magistrate's office until very near the last decade of the century, when the Hon. Dexter Richards, as related elsewhere in this work, was mentioned as being practically sure of election if he could be persuaded to offer himself as a candidate. This, however, he did not choose to do. After long consultation with his wife, he took what money the party managers wanted him to put up and built for the town a much-needed school, housing the five higher grades and the high school. This fine school, first occupied in 1898, with two additions, still (1963) well serves the children of Newport. So, for the third time, Newport almost contributed a name to the list of governors but just failed to score.

The history of our fourth contact was a story somewhat in reverse of the others. It was a case where a Newport man actually became Governor in fact, but never assumed the title.

In 1917 Jesse M. Barton, Judge of Probate for Sullivan County, was not only elected a member of New Hampshire's Senate, but also became its President. By the terms of our Constitution he thereby became next in line in case the Governorship became vacant. It also happened that the then Governor, Hon. Henry W. Keyes of Haverhill, because of illness became unable to finish his term. Mr. Barton was immediately sworn in as acting Governor, but did not, it seems, assume the title, although he did draw the pay. He was acting Governor for the remainder of the term. I do not remember that he has ever been known as "Governor Barton." How-

ever, for the purposes of this summary this may be cited as our fifth brush with the Governorship.

This long series of near-misses was continued in 1937, with Francis Parnell Murphy, a native of Winchester, New Hampshire, but long-time resident and industrialist in Newport. Mr. Murphy was a life-long shoe manufacturer, but in later years became interested in organized baseball, and still later in broadcasting. In all these ventures he was very successful, but was never too thoroughly immured by business to take an interest in any Newport activity.

He became a son-in-law of Newport by marrying Miss Mae Herrick, and not only maintaining but greatly improving the fine old brick Herrick homestead on Spring Street, which his family still owns.

Inclusion of Mr. Murphy in our list of "almosts" comes about through the decision, midway through his business career, of his removal to Nashua, where he bought on the northern border of the city one of its handsomest residences. So, when he became a candidate, Mr. Murphy was listed as coming not from "Newport" but from "Nashua." Newport, however, gave him a rousing popular vote. Although elected as a Republican, Governor Murphy co-operated well with the Roosevelt administration's New Deal policies. Upon the death, by accident, of his eldest son, Walter, he caused a very beautiful addition to St. Patrick's Cemetery to be created, and here is to be found the final resting place of the Governor and his wife, as well as other members of the family. He also created a $10,000 trust fund for its maintenance.

The Murphy episode recalls that of Ralph Metcalf, almost a full century before, the resemblance even running to the circumstance that each of them married a Newport woman.

To this list, must be added the name of Governor John Henry Bartlett, of Sunapee, who, though never a resident of Newport, was born and lived so near as to give Newport a bit of reflected glory. He was a classmate and Dartmouth friend of Harry B. Metcalf, Argus

editor and for a long-time contributed a column to this paper. Besides his term as Governor, Mr. Bartlett was Assistant Postmaster General of the United States, was a heavy real estate owner in the City of Washington, and, though a man of many interests, found time to write a history of Sunapee and a "Synoptic History of New Hampshire" which contains many unusual facts. His political resemblance to Governor Murphy is reinforced by the circumstance that he too, later in life, became a Democrat.

Let us close this chapter of "almosts," "nearlies," and "near-misses," with the hope that before too long there wil emerge into the sunlight of a full uncontested term in the Governorship **a Newport man.**

But, on second thought, why does it have to be a man? The memory of the great Sarah Hale suggests that after all, New Hampshire, sooner or later, is sure to select a woman for this job and when it does, the really appropriate thing would be to select **a Newport woman** to justify the faith of our first and greatest feminist.

One thing leads to another in this, our rambling history, and mention of Sarah reminds one that we haven't sufficiently emphasized the fact of women in politics. Right now (1963) we have two notable examples in Elsie Cora Bailey, who, though a native of Sunapee and a Democrat, has not only been elected as one of Newport's four members of the General Court, but when that number was re-apportioned to three, was still re-elected and scored a vote next to high man Maurice J. Downing, now in his sixth term as our representative.

Mr. Downing received the biggest vote in a field of six and thus may be known as our most popular vote-getter. He also is imported, hailing from far up in Maine, a condition that seems never to have affected his vote-bearing potential. He also is a heavy investor in Newport real estate. So we must say, "He has confidence in us, and we in him."

Bernice Sawyer MacWilliams, Register of Probate for many years, is a native of Warner and a Republican, but scores a big vote on both sides of the political ticket,

CHAPTER XX

WRITERS

Newport Has Turned Out Many

We've already given you some account of the spectacular career of our early townswoman, Sarah J. Hale. Others representing her day and age might be mentioned. Maybe the first of these, although a native of Goshen, would be Mary Dwinell Chellis Lund. This good moralist and prolific writer turned out a total of 28 story books — a notable stunt in anybody's record. They were great favorites among the Sunday School libraries of her period. In fact no Sunday School library would be caught without a full set. The moral of her stories was always good, and the triumph of the poor little boy over his neighboring rich boy was sure and well deserved.

The names of Joseph Parmelee and Edmund Wheeler occur often in this work. Parmelee, grandson of two of our very first settlers, was a more graceful writer than was Wheeler. Wheeler, however could cover more ground in less pages, and was a bit the more careful historian. The great number of facts contained in his History of Newport are emphasized rather than diminished by an occasional lapse — as when he showed himself married to his second wife before the death of his first. Cold type is notoriously slippery stuff, as the writer well knows.

Political controversy was the one theme in which the lawyer-editor Edmund Burke excelled, and his political essays—"Bundlecone Papers"—achieved national celebrity as the ablest of his period. Burke's remains also repose in our Maple Street Cemetery, on the right as you go in. In his lot also rest those of his grandson, Frank Dana, also a Newport lawyer, who turned out two or three novels, which have enjoyed considerable vogue.

Ann Parmelee, daughter of Joseph, was a writer of charm. She was first librarian of Richards Free Library. Her "Newport's Guest Book" was a much used volume of the nineties. Edward Jenks, editor of the Concord Statesman and well bearded writer, turned out some of the most charming poetry of his day. His house, burned in the great storm of the eighteen-nineties, stood where Dr. Robert Phillips now lives — part of the original

Jencks estate.

Turning to the editors, we have Cyrus Barton, early pilot of the New Hampshire Spectator, and powerful political writer, Capt. Olin H. Chase, native of Springfield. Spanish War officer and editor of the Republican Champion, whose diction was always notable; his contemporary, Hubbard Barton, for 28 years editor of The Argus, and George Bancroft Griffith, newspaper correspondent and editor, who was constantly heard from in the press — usually through the use of poetry. And a more recent contributor, Aria Cutting Roberts, a native but not a resident of Newport, also a poet of excellence, as was Willis Edwin Hurd whose contributions were always timely, though seldom brilliant.

Augusta Cooper Bristol of Croydon was often heard from in verse during her years, and Harry B. Metcalf was one of the most musical of poets, although in later years, he allowed editorial duties to obscure his talents as a poet.

Kenneth Andler, Newport lawyer, is one of those who gave up writing for the law. Nevertheless he contributed some very charming pieces — the best one on Newport Common — before he let go. A similar record was that of D. Sidney Rollins, Newport industrialist whose tendency to versify continued with him all his life, often with very pleasant results.

And so we come to our present crop of writers. These have passed from the category of pleasant occasional scribes, those whose pen has replaced the former citizen's pitchfork or hoe. I mean whose labors have become their profession. Chief of those would be Raymond Holden, poet and naturalist, who has revolutionized the Newport Library by organizing "The Friends of the Library," giving the place new life through new resources. Mr. Holden is the author of many books. The best known one here is "The Merrimack" one of the standard series on The Rivers of America. Mr. Holden has represented Newport in the legislature. He is also author of "The Last Fire-Haunted Spark." Through this effort he may be called the "Sarah J. Hale of Modern Newport."

Also outstanding as a writer is Evan Hill, frequent

contributor to The Saturday Evening Post. When you find something especially good in the Post it may actually be the work of Evan Hill, for his work isn't always signed. He does considerable "ghost writing" as well as making investigations for the Post, mostly along sociological lines. Evan lives in a charming spot at South Newport (Pollard's Mills to you), Raymond Holden's home is in an equally charming spot, out back of North Newport. A recent replacement on our literary front, is Ed DeCourcy, now editor of The Argus. He has revived "The Spectator," featured department of the paper, recalling the original name of Simon Brown's old paper, imported from Claremont.

Remains what was probably the hardest working writer of all, Henry Harrison Metcalf, ("HH") who, as Capt. Chase once remarked "has done more work for the State he never was paid for, than any other man." The following was contributed to this review by his granddaughter, Mrs. Helen M. Park, now a resident of Governor's Island, Lake Winnipesaukee.

Henry H. Metcalf

By Helen M. Park, Granddaughter

"The strongest incentive to future progress is knowledge of past achievement, in individual, state or national life.

"Familiarity with local, state or national history develops civic pride, which is the basis of true patriotism and the surest guaranty of the citizenship."

These above statements were written by the late Henry Harrison Metcalf, and published in his book, "New Hampshire in History," in 1922. Little did Henry H. Metcalf realize that these statements would apply to him some 40 years later, when published in high tribute to his memory, during the bi-centennial celebration at Newport, N. H.

"H.H." as he was known to his wide circle of friends around the state, spent a great deal of time in Newport, especially after his son, the late Harry B. Metcalf, became owner and publisher of The Argus-Champion.

Henry H. Metcalf was born in Newport, N. H. April 7, 1841. He attended Mt. Caesar Seminary, (Swanzey, N. H.) and the Law Department of the University of Michigan, from which University he received an LLB de-

gree in 1865. Mr. Metcalf received an honorary A.M. degree from Dartmouth in 1913.

He married Mary Jane Jackson Dec. 18, 1869, and they had two sons and one daughter, Harry Bingham, Edmund Burke, and Prudence Metcalf Pearson of Concord.

Mr. Metcalf was active around the state during his life time. He was an author of note, among his publications being: "New Hampshire Women," "New Hampshire Agriculture," "Harry Bingham Memorial", "One Thousand N. H. Notables," "New Hampshire in History," "Sullivan" and "Sullivan County Recollections." Mr. Metcalf was also editor of the "White Mountain Republic" of Littleton, N. H.; The State Press, (Dover); The Union-Manchester; and People and Patriot, (Concord).

He also founded the Granite Monthly at Dover in 1877, and edited the same at various times throughout his career.

Mr. Metcalf was appointed state historian in 1913 and as such edited three volumes of early laws of the State of New Hampshire.

He was president of the New Hampshire Old Home Week Assn. for 15 years, and lecturer of the State Grange for six years. A delegate from Concord in N. H. Constitutional Cenvention in 1920-23. He was a delegate from New Hampshire in the Democratic National Convention at St. Louis in 1876; past president of the New Hampshire Society of Sons of the American Revolution.

He also completed lengthy, historical research to preserve the heritage of New Hampshire. As a young man he was a great mountain climber.

Due appreciaton should be mentioned here to Mrs. William E. Spaulding (Caroline Pearson), daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harlan C. Pearson of Concord, and granddaughter of Henry H. Metcalf. Mrs. Spaulding did research and contributed some of the valuable data mentioned. Mrs. Spaulding vividly recalls her maternal grandfather mentioning that he traveled extensively around the state with Carrie Chapman Catt during the campaign to secure "Votes for Women," and he was so proud to receive a letter from her on his 90th birthday.

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